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THE TIMES

No. 64,526

MONDAY DECEMBER 28 1992

45p

Saddam threatens reprisal against 'aggression'

Americans shoot down Iraqi MiG

By JAMIE DETTMER
AND JAMES BONE

AN AMERICAN warplane shot down an Iraqi MiG fighter yesterday after what the Pentagon described as a grave challenge to the "no-fly" zone over southern Iraq.

The MiG was attacked after its pilot ignored an order from a pair of US F16 combat aircraft to retreat north of the 32nd parallel. One air-to-air missile was fired and the plane was hit. Another Iraqi jet escaped to the north.

The confrontation came during the second of two sorties by Iraqi planes into the exclusion area, which was imposed by Britain, France and America in August to shield Shia marsh Arabs from President Saddam Hussein's forces. Two Iraqi MiGs had earlier crossed the 32nd parallel, but retreated when American jets bore down on them. Twenty minutes later, the MiGs reappeared and were approached and warned by the F16s. The Iraqi pilots, "turned to confront the US aircraft" and were attacked, according to US Central Command in Florida.

The fate of the Iraqi pilot was unknown, but American airmen allowed an Iraqi search-and-rescue helicopter to enter the exclusion zone to fly to the crash site.

Baghdad last night denounced the American action and said it reserved the right to respond "in this aggression in the suitable manner at an appropriate time". An official spokesman said that the MiG had been on a routine patrol "over our national territory and within our borders" when it was intercepted by "planes of the vicious alliance".

Yesterday's clash was the second time that Baghdad

By twice ordering his jets to infiltrate the "no-fly" zone in southern Iraq yesterday, Saddam Hussein may have been testing American resolve during the Bush-Clinton handover

had challenged the southern "no-fly" zone. Two weeks ago, an Iraqi warplane made an unpunished incursion, but fled before it could be confronted by the allies. That incident was regarded as a deliberate attempt to probe the allies' resolve, and a Western official said yesterday: "Iraq is testing the determination of the coalition, given the change in the US administration and given the focus on Somalia and Bosnia."

The "no-fly" zone was imposed in August - along with one north of the 36th parallel to protect the Kurds - without the specific authority of the UN. A security council resolution passed during the Kurdish exodus just after the end of the Gulf war demanded that Iraq stop repressing its various ethnic groups, but it was deliberately split off from the main ceasefire resolution because council members did not want it to authorise the use of force. The flight bans were, however, based on an emerging principle that allows force to be used to avert a humanitarian catastrophe.

For the first few months, the south was policed without confrontation and more than 7,500 sorties were flown by Western aircraft - including British Tornados and reconnaissance planes - without incident or challenge. But recently, according to the Pentagon, Iraqi jets had begun to play a "cat and mouse game" with the Americans and Rob-

ert Gates, the director of the CIA, described yesterday's clash as part of a pattern of "increasing Iraqi aggressiveness".

In the past few days, the Bush administration has been alarmed by reports suggesting that Saddam has massed forces close to the Kurdish enclave in the north, raising fears that he could suddenly attack. Baghdad has also been suspected of being behind a series of bombings of relief trucks that led the UN to



suspend its aid convoys to the Kurds on December 19.

On the same day, it emerged yesterday, Saddam declared that he would "apply the rule of law" in northern Iraq once the West lifted its air umbrella from the region. He told Bulent Ecevit, leader of the Turkish Democratic Left party: "Once foreign troops are out, the people in the north will kick these elements (Kurdish rebels) out and establish peace and security in this area as part of Iraq. We wish, when the circumstances are better, to

apply the rule of law in northern Iraq."

While the UN has been concentrating on helping the Kurds through the winter, it admits it has neglected the Shias to the south. Several hundred UN guards are stationed in the north, but the new UN Memorandum of Understanding with Iraq on humanitarian operations stipulates that none can police the southern marshes. Emma Nicholson MP told the security council recently that there were no UN personnel in the south and Max van der Stoep, the UN human rights rapporteur for Iraq, called last month for monitors to be sent to the area.

Before the exclusion ban was introduced, Mr van der Stoep told the security council that he feared an Iraqi offensive against the Shias that could mirror the attempted genocide of the Kurds in the 1980s. In his report last month, he said that human rights in the south had not improved.

Britain was among the nations pressing hardest for the "no-fly" zone in the south, where Iraqi forces had been systematically harassing and intimidating Saddam's Shia opponents, many of whom fled to the marshes, and the government will give firm backing to the Americans over yesterday's confrontation.

The incident is, however, likely to increase pressure from Muslim countries for Britain and America to enforce the "no-fly" zone over Bosnia-Herzegovina. But Bush administration officials dismissed suggestions yesterday that the clash could be a convenient way of sending a tough message to Belgrade, indicating how serious America would be in enforcing the Bosnian flight ban.



Face of authority: a Palestinian boy is arrested and forced into a jeep by a hooded Israeli border policeman in East Jerusalem during weekend clashes provoked by Israel's deportation of 415 Palestinians. Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli prime minister, yesterday ordered an army unit out of the occupied

Gaza Strip after 11 Palestinians were shot and killed in the unrest. Israel radio reported. Israel also told the United Nations that it will not reverse the expulsions.

High court challenge, page 6
Letters, page 11

Tories plan big boost for rented housing

By SHEILA GUNN
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

JOHN Major's policy-makers are working on reforms to create a new generation of private landlords as part of a strategy to make more homes readily available near areas with jobs.

Initiatives to revive the private rented sector are being drawn up to encourage a mobile labour force, particularly of young people. Tax concessions and other incentives for institutions, such as pension funds, to build or buy property for rent are under consideration.

The policy work, part of the prime minister's drive for a new domestic agenda in 1993, is a recognition that home ownership, the great tenet of the Thatcher administrations, is not the best or preferred option for many.

The initiatives are unlikely to be ready in time for next spring's Budget, but may be included in the second Budget at the end of the year.

Sir George Young, the housing minister, said yesterday: "The government is interested in the revival of the private rented sector and is having a series of discussions to see what needs to be done to get respectable money invested in accommodation to rent."

Talks are going on with the institutions to find ways to fill the "yield gap" to make it worthwhile for them to invest in property to rent. Officials from the prime minister's policy unit, the environment department and the Treasury are also involved.

The role of housing associations is to be changed so that, as well as building and renting out homes, they can offer to manage property on behalf of institutional landlords.

The new responsibility will relieve the landlords of the burden of becoming estate managers and dealing directly with tenants. But the

Continued on page 2, col 4

Tax break, page 2

Ready for a rush on high streets and roads

By JENNY KNIGHT

BARGAIN-hunters will throng shopping centres around Britain today as many department stores begin sales that offer a last hope of making up for a disastrous year for retailers.

Bank holiday traffic jams are also expected on main routes as people return home after Christmas. The start of sales at Lakeside shopping centre in Thurrock, Essex, threatens to cause heavy con-

gestion around junctions 30 and 31 on the M25.

Thousands of people are booked on holiday flights to European ski-resorts. Gatwick Airport reported that more than 32,000 left yesterday, with only minimal delays.

The annual multi-million pound newspaper and television advertising campaign by holiday companies is expected to intensify in the next few days as the market leaders struggle to retain their share. There are more bookings made in January than any other month and many companies are cutting prices.

Traffic levels more like those of a weekday rush-hour were reported yesterday on the M25 and the M6. The weather will be brighter today after overnight fog.

Holiday deaths, page 2
Cut-price tours, page 3

British tank force told not to be 'sitting targets' in Bosnia

FROM BILL FROST
IN KISSELJAK

BRITISH commanders of Warrior and Scimitar armoured vehicles in Bosnia have been ordered to stop presenting themselves as "sitting targets in the turret" when travelling through high-risk areas, after two attacks on British troops at the weekend.

Lieutenant Justin Freeland, the British officer wounded in a mortar attack on his armoured column, was recovering last night at a military hospital in Vitez. In another incident on Boxing Day a second squadron of Warriors on patrol in central Bosnia came under fire. Three 82mm mortar rounds were fired from Serb-held positions in contravention of a safe passage deal agreed between local commanders and British forces.

Lieutenant Freeland, 25, of the 9/12 Lancers, was hit in



Freeland: protected by heavy winter clothes

the arm by shrapnel when three mortar bombs landed close to his Scimitar armoured reconnaissance vehicle on Saturday. The lieutenant, who had shrapnel removed from a wound to his right arm, said at first he had not realised he had been hit in the mortar attack, near the disputed enclave of Tuzla. He thought he

had simply been bruised in the blast.

Speaking with his camouflage jacket draped around his bandaged arm, he said the mortar bomb that injured him landed just five yards from his Scimitar, while he had his head and shoulders out of the commander's turret. "I got a sharp pain in my right arm. From that moment I knew I had been hit by something."

At first he thought he had just been bruised, but later he felt blood trickling down his arm into his glove. Lieutenant Freeland said his heavy winter clothing probably protected him from further injury, while his gunner next to him felt shrapnel rattle off his helmet. He endured an agonising six-hour drive on appalling roads to a field hospital, but said he had no intention of returning home to Britain.

Muslims snub UN, page 7

Hunt for sex attack murderer

By JOHN VINCENT

POLICE were last night hunting the killer of 14-year-old Johanna Young, whose body was found in a flooded Norfolk pit four days after she went missing from home. Her underclothes and jeans had been removed and Detective Superintendent Michael Cole said that she had been sexually assaulted but not raped.

Johanna went missing from her home in Watton, Norfolk, last Wednesday and her body was found in the 7ft-deep pit late on Boxing day. She had been hit on the head.

Supt Cole said that police were hunting a "brutal, unfeeling killer" who may have had local knowledge. The girl's parents, Robert and Carol Young, had joined the police hunt over Christmas.

Report, page 3

Glimmer of hope at end of the 1992 tunnel

By PETER RIDDELL
POLITICAL EDITOR

MORE people have had a bad year in 1992 than a good one, particularly the married, middle aged, unemployed and those who live in London and the South East. A much smaller number expect a good year in 1993 than in previous years.

The latest Mori poll for Times Newspapers does, however, suggest that the worst of this autumn's pessimism about the economic outlook may have passed. That has been matched by a small drop in previously high levels of dissatisfaction with the government and John Major as prime minister, although voting intentions have hardly changed over the past month.

The annual question about experiences

over the past 12 months shows a sharp drop in those saying they had a good year, down to just over a third compared with about three-fifths during the previous five years. This was exceeded by those saying they had a bad year, now just over two-fifths, after rising steadily since 1987. Men have had a worse year than women, and 45 to 64-year-olds a worse year than those under 35.

The proportion expecting a good year over the next 12 months has dropped to 51 per cent, compared with 63 per cent at the end of 1991. The number expecting a bad year has remained stable at 24 per cent.

Unemployment is expected to continue to rise in the new year by a nine to one margin, while more expect inflation and income tax to rise rather than to decline. Expectations about mortgage interest

rates are in rough balance, while a small margin (28 per cent against 25 per cent) expect a fall rather than a rise in house prices. Twice as many in Scotland expect house prices to rise than in southern England, where only 19 per cent expect them to rise and 30 per cent expect a fall.

Just over a half expect their own standard of living to remain the same, and nearly three in ten think they will experience a decline, while half that are looking for an increase.

The net balance expecting the general economic condition to improve rather than to get worse over the next 12 months has, however, narrowed from minus 34 points in November to minus 16 points now. That is half the level of August and September and compares with a low point of minus 46 points in

Continued on page 2, col 5

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BMA fears elderly will be victimised by health reforms

By JOHN YOUNG

NATIONAL Health Service reforms may make it more difficult for elderly people to obtain specialised hospital treatment, according to the British Medical Association. Its reservations echo those already voiced by other organisations concerned with patients' welfare.

The association is unwilling to concede that the elderly are already suffering discrimination, but it says that they are the biggest users of health services and therefore the most vulnerable as hospitals run out of money and are forced to close beds and reduce the number of operations.

For the elderly, there are few gains of comfort to be gained from the knowledge that the NHS is nearly half a century old. The noble idea, conceived during the second world war, that everyone,

regardless of wealth or social standing, should have access to the best medical treatment, is compromised by the economic realities of the nineties. "In what appears to be a renewed funding crisis, it would be totally unacceptable for the admission of patients to specialist treatment to be determined on anything other than clinical grounds," a BMA spokesman said.

An authoritative report published earlier this month suggested that older people faced discrimination in access to coronary care on the grounds of their age alone, and might be placed at a further disadvantage by the health service reforms.

The report, commissioned by the Carnegie Trust, said that overt discrimination could arise if purchasing authorities negotiated separate

contracts for different age groups. There could be covert discrimination if hospital trusts, operating on a flat rate of payment, designated older people whose length of stay might be longer than average as "medically" unsuitable for treatment, when the true criterion was their poorer profit margin.

"We fear that fiscal pressures will lead to such age discrimination unless case-mix specifications are rigorous and are monitored by specific audit," the report said. Older people should not be offered prosthetic care until all possibilities for therapeutic intervention had been explored.

The authors of the report referred to the recent Dudley and Burns study in which questionnaires were sent to all 175 consultants in charge of coronary care units in the UK. Of the 134 who replied, 26 said they operated an age-related admission policy, with age limits ranging from 65 to 80. A further 46 employed age as a criterion when determining the use of expensive but potentially life-saving thrombolytic drugs.

Toby Harris, director of the Association of Community Health Councils, said that he had been worried since the start of the changes in the health service that some sort of rationing would be introduced. Although the association had no direct evidence, the Carnegie report confirmed its fears. "It is important that there should be a proper public debate about who is going to get treatment and who isn't," he said.

Age Concern said that older people should never be denied treatment solely on the grounds of their age. "Before any decision regarding treatment is taken, a full assessment of the person's condition, and how beneficial treatment would be, must be made," a spokesman said.

Linda Lamont, director of the Patients' Association, said that age discrimination was something it had been aware of in a number of ways. The difficulties experienced by older people in getting on to waiting lists for operations such as hip replacements had been well publicised, but access to such things as coronary and dialysis treatment raised new questions.

"Do we really mean it when we say we want people to go on into healthy old age, or is it just lip service? These are ethical questions which we are going to face more and more," she said. "I think there will have to be careful scrutiny of NHS contracts. This whole rationing problem is going to come home to roost."

Elder statesmen find unity on prime time

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TWO elder statesmen of British politics, who ruled on opposite sides of the Commons for much of the 1970s, joined forces yesterday to advise John Major where he is going wrong.

With the benefit of hindsight, Messrs Heath and Callaghan skated over their own crises in office with miners, unemployment and the economy, and, not without irony, ticked off the prime minister and his team for their handling of the great issues of the day.

In a joint interview on BBC Radio 4 interspersed with jocular sparring, the former Conservative and Labour prime ministers agreed:

□ The Major government has an "attitude" problem.

□ John Major would have benefited from a spell in opposition.

□ The government's objective should be full employment.

□ The government disastrously mishandled the pit closures.

□ Britain should sign the social chapter to the Maastricht treaty.

□ The prime minister should resist direct intervention in Yugoslavia but ring-fence the former republics.

□ The calibre of MPs entering Parliament is not what it was.

□ The press behaves irresponsibly.

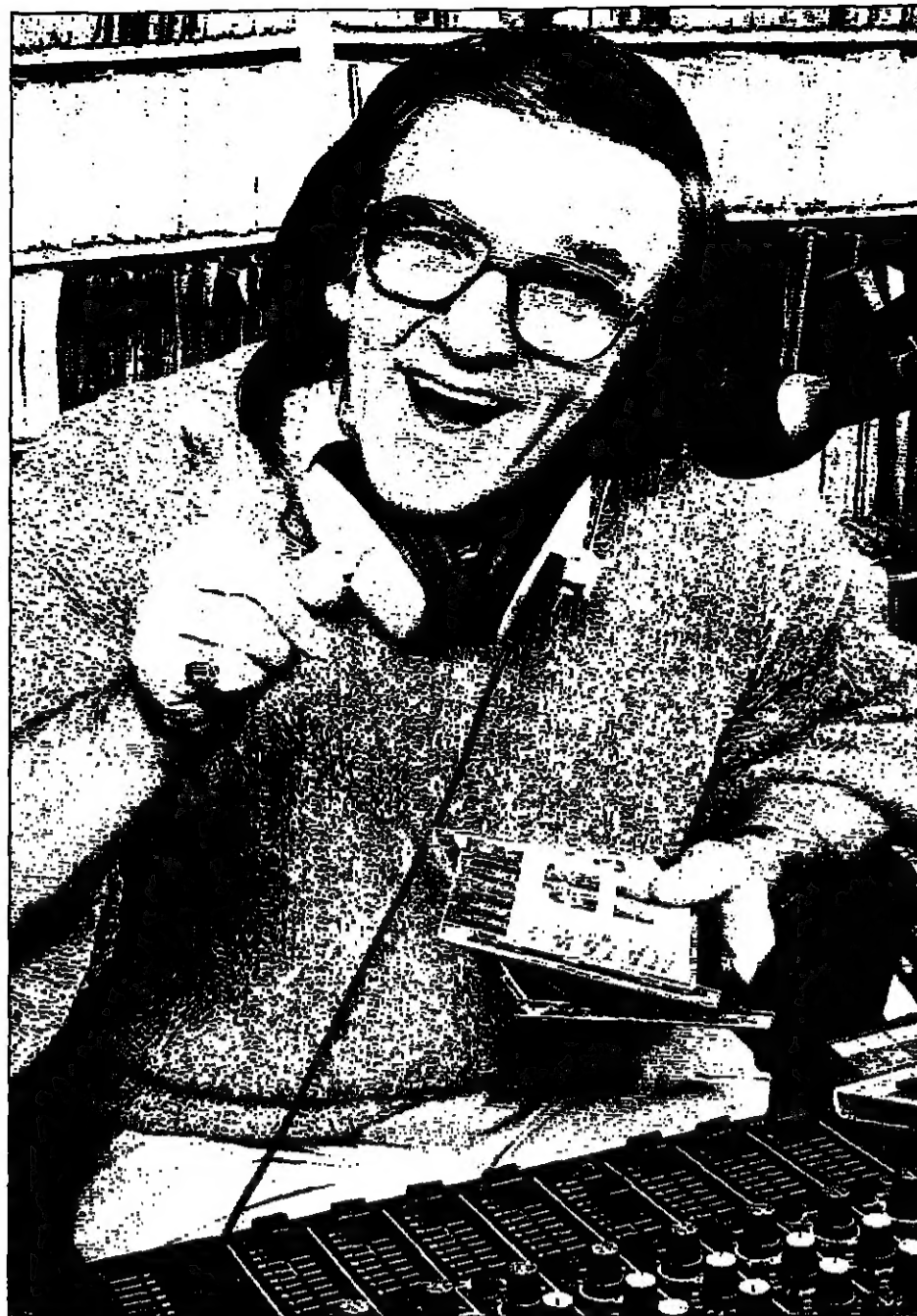
While present-day ministers may dismiss the remarks as the pontifications of yesterday's men, both politicians have clearly lost none of their mental agility, even if they displayed a certain amnesia about their time in 10 Downing Street.

Lord Callaghan congratulated Sir Edward for coming closer than anybody to closing a deal with the miners, forgetting to mention their terminal damage to the Heath government. Sir Edward, in turn, implicitly criticised Mr Heseltine's handling of the pit closures, without mentioning that the president of the board of trade was once one of his own protégés.

Lord Callaghan said the Major government was "accident-prone" and commented: "The government does not know where it is going, stumbling from one place to another."

Sir Edward cited the mishandling of the pit closures as evidence of ministers taking decisions without realising the consequences. It was much worse than carelessness, he said: it was "an attitude of mind".

Lord Callaghan, when chided about the fatal "Crisis, what crisis?" comment attributed to him when prime minister, conceded that towards the end "I got rather tired and I was not as quick on my feet".



End of the line: Alan Freeman signed off yesterday after 32 years of *Pick of the Pops*

'Fluff' bids a bright farewell to his faithful pop-pickers

By JOE JOSEPH

WITH no fussier a farewell to pop pickers than "All right? Stay bright!", Alan Freeman, one of the grand old disc jockeys, signed off for good from his Radio 1 show *Pick of the Pops* yesterday. Freeman, 65, took with him his crazy catchphrases, including "Not arf", his curious nickname "Fluff", and his trademark brassy theme tune, which ensured that if your radio started blaring "Deeyan, deeyan, deeyan, deeyan, deeyan, deeyan, deeyan, deeyan", Fluff was about to call you a pop-picker.

Freeman's longevity in pop proves you didn't really have to die before you got old just to save face while many peers and captains of industry are much younger than Fluff. He is barely older than many, still successful pop stars whose

records he plugged in the 1960s. Like them, he proved that the bad fall early, but the good age well. He will continue to work for Radio 1, on a Saturday evening rock music programme.

Yesterday's two-hour *Pick of the Pops* displayed all the skills that have helped Freeman to keep his career and his crow's feet, while also making his voice as recognisable as those of other radio greats, such as Alistair Cooke, John Arlott and Brian Johnston. But while they had cricket or continents to work with, Freeman had just the snatches of space between often dire pop songs.

He won the respect of his six million listeners by refusing to play any Des O'Connor or Ken Dodd records and he held their loyalty by turning his weekly show into a mini history lesson on pop music. Songs were often introduced with a rapid-fire rundown on

the singer or details of those who had sung it in the past. Yet he managed to impose his personality on the show, and on the British public, without talking very much, and he seems more compared to younger DJs, who like to discuss every subject that interests them, from A to B.

Though forced by the programme's format to play certain records — yesterday he was reminiscing over the pop charts from 1961, 1970 and 1982 — he succeeded in conveying his opinion on those he rated duds. An anguished scream of "Oh no", followed by the words "Oh yeah" preceded a replay yesterday of Clive Dunn's grim 1970 hit *Grandad*. "And make no mistake pop-pickers," added Fluff, "it was selling by the million and heading straight for number one. Who came to the rescue?... Dave Edmunds with *I Hear You Knocking*. Not arf."

Eleven die on roads over holiday weekend

At least 11 people were killed in road accidents over the weekend, including a man hit by a car on Boxing day as he walked along a dark road where six years earlier a similar accident had left him disabled and epileptic. The car failed to stop after hitting Michael Sandford, 31, on the A39 near his home in Dunster, Somerset.

Other victims included a couple in their twenties who died in a head-on crash at Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex, a man aged 33 who was killed after being knocked down on a pedestrian crossing in Leeds and a driver from Highgate, north London, who died when his car swerved off the road at Weybridge, Surrey, and crashed into a tree. Frank Tournier, 72, of Bridport, Dorset, was knocked down and killed while crossing the eastbound carriageway of the A35 between Dorchester and Puddletown.

Bombs end IRA truce

Two coffee-jar bombs thrown at a police station in Londonderry ended the IRA's Christmas truce in Northern Ireland in the early hours of yesterday. There were no reports of injuries and damage was not thought to be serious. Security services waited until first light to investigate damage at the city's Rosemount police station. The bombs had been thrown half an hour after midnight at the end of Boxing day, the deadline given by the IRA as the end of the temporary respite in attacks in the province.

Roadworks rationed

New rules to try to reduce the five million holes dug in roads each year are introduced this week. Cases of the same stretch of road being dug up should decrease under the Roads and Street Works Act. Local authorities will have to work with gas, electricity and water companies to co-ordinate roadworks. The act provides for fewer roadworks and requires that they are supervised, lit and repaired.

Fatal chainsaw accident

A man bled to death in front of his wife after accidentally severing the artery in his left thigh with a chainsaw. George Ankers, 36, was cutting pallets for firewood on Boxing day night in the back yard of his remote cottage at Waddingham, Lincolnshire. His wife dialled 999 and an emergency services doctor arrived within 10 minutes but Mr Ankers was pronounced dead at home.

Hotel owner stabbed

The new owner of a seafront hotel on the Isle of Wight was stabbed to death early yesterday. Police, who were called to the Metropole Hotel at Ventnor just before 2am, found James Savva, 43, bleeding from three stab wounds to his chest. Police said the attack, which happened after Mr Savva called last orders, seemed to be over a woman and had a domestic background. A man in his 20s is being questioned.

Comedian dies at 75

The comedian Carole Robinson, right, has died aged 75. He was admitted to Queen Mary's Hospital in Roehampton, southwest London, earlier this month suffering from a bowel infection. He was perhaps best known for his character Carole the Cad — an overgrown schoolboy. His last film appearance was in *Shirley Valentine*, shown on television on Christmas day. *Obituary*, page 13



175,000 job losses

Labour launched its unemployment initiative yesterday with a survey showing that nearly 175,000 redundancies had been announced since the Conservatives returned to power. London and the South East were the worst affected. Labour also says 1993 will see nearly one million people under 25 without jobs — what it calls a "wasted generation".

SAVOY TAYLORS GUILD

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Tory boost for rented housing

Continued from page 1

change should also prevent a return to Ratchmanism. A senior official called the strategy a logical extension of Norman (now Lord) Tebbit's "on yer bike" philosophy. "We want to make sure that when someone gets on his or her bike to go and hunt for a job, they can find an affordable home to rent near that job at the end of their journey."

Building societies are likely to be included in the strategy despite failure to encourage them to become landlords rather than evict those who cannot pay mortgages.

The private rented sector was sidelined under the Thatcherite priorities of home ownership and sale of council homes. About 90 per cent of homes were rented privately in the 1960s, contracting to less than 10 per cent today. This compares to a vigorous rented sector on the Continent.

The percentage of homes for rent in Britain is believed to be rising, however, as a side-effect of the recession. Owners who cannot sell their property are renting it out as a last resort and, in turn, renting homes.

Mr Major's officials are also working, under pressure from Southern MPs, on a reshuffle of regional and urban aid with the idea of redirecting funds to Tory heartlands in the South-east hit by the recession.

Peter Mandelson, Labour MP for Hartlepool, commented yesterday: "Just because the South is experiencing high but new levels of unemployment does not mean to say that poverty and hardship in the North has disappeared. It means that the South is beginning to taste what the North has suffered for many years."

Tax help for tenants will add new burden to mortgage-trap buyers

By LINDSAY COOK, MONEY EDITOR

TAX breaks for providing rented property are on the political agenda because banks, building societies and insurance companies have told the government that they can see no advantage in investing in the rented sector.

Sir George Young, the housing minister, had a series of meetings with major financial institutions in the summer in an attempt to persuade them of the virtues of the rented sector. Many felt afterwards that the meetings crystallised the drawbacks of becoming landlords without offering any advantages.

Any tax incentive, if effective in expanding the rental sector, could provide another blow to the hundreds of thousands of first-time buyers who have bought studio and one bedroom flats in the past few years. Those in the South East are often trapped by a mortgage that is higher than the

value of the property. In some cases the shortfall is £40,000 or more. They have no chance of moving and even the recent government initiatives to allow building societies to lend up to £25,000 unsecured do not help them.

If the move to renting for young people was established, the value of the typical first-time buyer's property could fall even further as the number of potential buyers was reduced. Those choosing to buy after ten years or so of renting would be likely to move straight to a family-sized property, as in western Germany, where 45 per cent of homes are in privately rented.

A move to renting is vital if the country's workforce is to be able to move for jobs or promotion. When property prices were rising, young people could easily sell and the profit on the property would cover the costs of estate agents

and solicitors. Since the autumn of 1988 the housing market has been stagnant.

Several employers have stopped taking on properties from employees they are transferring from one part of the country to another because they could not sell them and ended up with a declining asset on their books.

Many of those made redundant have managed to move only because they have rented out their home to cover the mortgage and rented another property. That has expanded the rental market in the South East and other areas. For the past few years it has been cheaper to rent than buy in many parts of the country. In London, rents have fallen to as low as 6 per cent of a property's value.

Mortgage rates come down to 8.5 per cent in January and the first £30,000 of a loan is reduced further by basic rate

tax relief. That tax relief at source is lost for people who rent their homes out. But they can set all the mortgage interest costs — not just the first £30,000 — against the rental income at the end of the financial year.

The previous attempt to help the rental sector will soon come to an end. Assured tenancy business expansion schemes will have to stop funding new properties for rental after the end of 1993. The schemes have been available since the autumn of 1988, giving individual investors the chance to put up to £40,000 a year into the property market at only £24,000 for a higher rate taxpayer. This is because investments attract tax relief at the investor's highest rate. In addition, any gains are free of capital gains tax. Hundreds of millions of pounds are invested in the schemes each year.

The new type of assured tenancies also tend to have a guarantee to investors that a housing association or the lender will buy the properties at a fixed price after the five-year period of the investment. That is largely because the early investors in the schemes will see their investments mature next year and will in many cases see large losses. Homeowners are also being encouraged to rent out rooms. Earlier this year the government announced that homeowners could rent out rooms and earn up to £55 a week and not pay any tax on the income. While intended to boost the rental market, the initiative to some extent legalised the existing lodgers that had not been declared to the taxman.

Hopes dwindle for a good 1993

Continued from page 1

October. The current rating is similar to a year ago and reflects a marked deterioration since the optimistic period around the time of the April general election, when the net balance was plus 21 points.

Labour has retained its large lead over the Tories in voting intentions, at 47 per cent against 34 per cent, the same as in November. The Liberal Democrats are on 16 per cent. This is after excluding 15 per cent of don't knows.

The Labour lead is largest among those aged under 24,

those living in the North and Scotland, among council tenants and those who do not read newspapers.

John Smith, however, still enjoys only a small favourable rating. After press criticism of his record as Labour leader, his rating (satisfied less dissatisfied) has slipped, for the second month in succession, to plus 4 points, against plus 12 points in November.

The standing of Mr Major and his government has picked up slightly from the low levels of earlier in the autumn. The government's rating is

now minus 64 points, against minus 70 points a month ago, although just over a half of Tory supporters are dissatisfied. Mr Major's standing is now minus 36 points, compared with minus 44 points previously.

MORI interviewed a representative quota sample of 1,832 adults aged 18 plus at 143 constituency sampling points across Britain. Interviews were conducted face-to-face on December 11 to 15. Data were weighted to match the profile of the population. © MORI/Times Newspapers

سازمان اسناد و کتابخانه ملی

Missing girl, 14, is found murdered in water-filled pit

BY JOHN VINCENT

A ROUTINE search for a girl missing from home turned into a murder hunt yesterday after her partially clothed body was found in a water-filled pit.

Johanna Young, 14, had been hit on the back of the head and had been sexually assaulted, police said.

Johanna had left her home in Watton, Norfolk, on Wednesday evening and was last seen outside a fish and chip shop in the high street about 8pm. Her parents, Robert and Carol Young, joined the police search, believing that she had made a spur-of-the-moment decision to go away after a recent break-up with her boyfriend.

On Boxing day, after a police search of woods and isolated farm buildings, her body, minus jeans and underclothing, was found in a pit a mile from her home. Det Supt Michael Cole, leading the murder enquiry, said that she had been hit on the head before being dumped. "The indications are that she was sexually assaulted, although there is no evidence of rape," he said. "The man who did this was a brutal, unfeeling killer."

He added that a man walking his dog had found Johanna's trainers nearby placed side by side in a hedgerow 400 yards from the body. Her underclothes were in the road 200 yards away. Her jeans were still missing. A

police dog later found the body in the 7ft pit, down a muddy cul-de-sac often used by courting couples, suggesting to detectives that the killer may have known the area. The body was recovered by police divers on Saturday night.

Johanna's former boyfriend, Ryan Firman, 17, with whom she had been going out for four months before breaking up with him two days before her disappearance, had provided police with background information and helped in the search.

Mr Young, 40, said of his daughter: "The last time I saw her she was bubbly and full of life. She had no cares. She had no enemies in the world — she was such a happy, friendly girl. The last few days have been absolute hell for us. We first began to get worried about her on Thursday morning when she did not turn up to do her paper round."

Her grandfather, Stanley Young, said: "She is one of 13 granddaughters and although we didn't see a lot of her, we loved her. You see this sort of thing on television and it doesn't mean much, but when it is one of your own your mind is in turmoil."

The murder is the latest in a string of attacks and disappearances in Norfolk — many unsolved — since Easter, 1969, when a bicycle belonging to April Fabb, 13, was found undamaged in a field near her home at Cromer. She has never been traced. Five months later, Steven Newing, 11, vanished outside his home in Fakenham.

Susan Long, 17, was found strangled and sexually assaulted at Aylsham in 1970 and four years later the headless body of a woman in a night-dress was dumped at Swaffham. In the same month, Pamela Exall, 21, vanished on a camping holiday at Snettisham. In 1977, the partly clothed body of Heidi Reddin, 14, was found in a water-filled ditch two miles from her home at Downham Market. Three months ago, Natalie Pearman, a prostitute aged 16, was murdered and dumped in woodland near Norwich.



Johanna: last seen on Wednesday night

Orkney truce offered

BY RAY CLANCY

ONE of the mothers at the centre of the child sex abuse allegations in Orkney has offered to drop her court action against the island council.

Mrs M told the council in writing that she would stop her proceedings in return for a full public apology by New Year's eve. Her offer does not affect the civil action being taken by 18 other individuals connected with the scandal. They are continuing with their claims for compensation after being vindicated by Lord Clyde's report, published in October.

"I am trying to free the

logjam and make some kind of progress. I want to drop the civil action and just go for a public retraction and denial," said Mrs M, whose two youngest sons were taken from their home on South Ronaldsay in dawn raids in February 1991. Seven children were removed from other homes. Mrs M said that she was making a genuine appeal to the council at a time of year when forgiveness was uppermost in people's minds.

A spokesman for the council said that the letter had been received but refused to comment further or to say whether a reply was being considered.



Walking it off: the winter sun brought the post-Christmas ramblers out on Box Hill, near Dorking, yesterday

Best steps for a hangover may be across fields

BY JOHN YOUNG

THE countryside and the open spaces are not just for summer. Townspeople faced with days of leisure until the new year could cure hangovers by stretching their limbs and opening their lungs to a dose of fresh air.

To start with, there is the old standby: a good walk. Given a bright, frosty day the countryside in winter offers clear, uninterrupted views across bare trees and silent fields. Despite the protests about farmers

and landowners blocking rights of way, there are thousands of miles of well marked footpaths and bridleways. There is no need to drive to the coast or a national park; most county councils produce guidebooks and leaflets on local walks.

For those reluctant to trust their own navigation, the National Trust and the Ramblers' Association have joined in organising guided walks in Wessex over the holidays. Meeting points include Stourhead, Wiltshire, 10.30am tomorrow; Corfe Castle,

Dorset, 11am on Wednesday; Woolley Hole, Somerset, 11 am on Wednesday; Lambert's Castle, Dorset, 11am on Friday; and Lacock, Wiltshire, 11am on Saturday.

For the more energetic, there are New Year's day road races. Serious competitors need to train but there is usually nothing to stop the bystander joining in for a mile or two at the back of the pack. Details can be found in *Athletics Weekly* and *Athletics Today*. For would-be cyclists and horseriders local newspaper and magazine adver-

tisements will direct you to hire shops and livery stables. For the less landbound the Amateur Swimming Association's Aquafit programme operates at most local authority pools, and consists of continuous swimming and exercises in water for between 30 and 45 minutes.

Field sports should not be embarked upon casually as a means of working off Christmas *avoidpols*, although following the hunt can be an exhilarating experience. Forthcoming meets are listed in *Horse and Hound*.

48 prison rioters likely to face mutiny charges

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

THE riot at Reading remand centre, which ended late on Saturday night, is likely to lead to 48 inmates facing charges of assault, arson and prison mutiny.

As police and the governor began investigating the violence and destruction, prison officers yesterday assessed the damage. Trouble erupted when the inmates refused to return to their cells at the end of a recreation period. One report suggested the riot was sparked because they were not allowed to watch *The Darling Buds of May*.

Paul Dixon, the governor, described the destruction as "wanton vandalism". The rioters occupied a wing at the centre for three hours, smashing furniture and lighting fires before officers in riot gear stormed into the building and regained control. Only 11 officers had been on duty to control the 128 inmates in the centre and staff were forced to withdraw from the wing as the trouble began. At one point, four inmates seized a van and tried to break out by ramming a security gate.

Rioters caused extensive destruction to the gymnasium, recreation centre, and education department. Televisions were smashed, washbasins ripped out, computers and

printers wrecked, and light fittings, table-tennis and pool tables were destroyed.

The gym was gutted by fire after inmates set off furniture alight. Mr Dixon said: "I feel very disappointed. We were trying to provide the best facilities we could in the circumstances and they just went on the rampage." There was a new offence of prison mutiny carrying a sentence of ten years, and charges were likely, he added.

Yesterday it emerged that the Board of Visitors had warned the Home Office that the building was not suitable for holding young remand prisoners from distant counties. Salma Tognarelli, chairman of the centre's board, said it was in an unsuitable location "as it is in the centre of town and has only two exercise yards. We feel strongly that young prisoners need to get rid of their pent-up energy with lots of exercise."

The riot ended when up to 150 officers from the centre and 11 other prison service centres retook control. Three were taken to hospital with injuries suffered in clashes with inmates. Forty inmates who did not want to be involved in the riot gave themselves up to police and were taken to Reading police station.

Clarke cracks down on tearaways

A NETWORK of secure units for persistent young offenders is being considered by the Home Office (Richard Ford writes).

Kenneth Clarke is anxious to act against a small group of hard-core offenders who, he believes, must be restrained through a tough regime that also offers affection. The move follows a decade in which emphasis has been placed on

punishment within the community. In 1990, 90 per cent of boys aged 10-13 found guilty or cautioned for indictable offences in England and Wales were cautioned, 69 per cent of those aged 14-16, and 21 per cent aged 17-20.

Three months ago Mr Clarke signalled his unhappiness with the results of this strategy, telling the Conservative party that a small number

of children were committing a large number of crimes.

Prison Reform Trust figures show that the minimum age for imprisonment in England and Wales is similar to other European countries. In England and Wales it is 15, the same as in Denmark and Sweden. It is 14 in Italy and 16 in Holland.

Leading article, page 11

Tour firms cut prices to woo early bookers

BY HARVEY ELLIOTT
TRAVEL CORRESPONDENT

THE seasonal battle to entice potential holidaymakers into travel agencies will reach a climax over the next few days with a multi-million-pound television advertising bombardment by the three biggest holiday companies. The dilemma for the customer is whether to take advantage of the reduced prices now or to see if they come down further.

Charles Newbold, managing director of Thomson, the biggest holiday company, is unequivocal. "We have cut the price of our million holidays out of the total number on sale for next summer of about two and a quarter million. When they have gone, the others will be sold at the original price."

The price cuts initiated by Thomson, reducing some package holidays by about £50 and cutting the company's original planned revenue by £50 million, are being increased by a fierce battle among high street travel agents. Each of the big three — Thomson, Owners Abroad and Airtours — have integrated travel organisations with tour operators, airlines and travel agents, each owned by the same parent organisation or with cross-investment.

Travel agencies normally charge about 10 per cent commission to the tour operator to sell their product, with additional profit generated by selling insurance cover and special deals. Lunn Poly, part of the Thomson group, is virtually forgoing its commission by cutting 10 per cent from the brochure price of every holiday it sells between now and January 2. The move will be matched by Thomas Cook and Pickfords.

Early bookings are of vital importance to travel agents and to tour operators because they not only bring in immediate cash but also enable the firms to predict the year's bookings. About 11 million holidays will be sold this year. Research has shown that 35 per cent are booked within two months of departure, 40 per cent up to six months ahead and 22 per cent more than seven months ahead.

Optimistic shops, page 1

British chess celebrates remarkable year

BY RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

AS THE chess community gathers today for the Hastings International tournament, the traditional climax to the chess year in the UK, it will be looking back on 12 months which have been remarkable for the game worldwide and in Britain in particular.

In 1992 Michael Adams, 21, the grandmaster from Truro, notched up two of the greatest tournament successes of his career, in competitions in Brussels and in the Dutch town of Tilburg, earning a total of £80,000 in prize money — a British all-time record.

England, recovering from the shock of having to face a horde of newly created ex-Soviet republics at the Manila chess Olympics in the summer, went on to take the bronze medals at the European team championship at Debrecen in Hungary, behind only Russia and Ukraine. The heroes were Michael Adams and Nigel Short, England's best ever player.

Short has confirmed his place in chess history. In April he overcame the former Soviet world champion Anatoly Karpov in their match in Spain. This victory



Polgar and Bareev practise en route to Hastings

has pushed Short into the final of the world championship qualifying competition. On January 10 he will play out this final match in Madrid against the Dutchman Jan Timman, and if Short wins he will go on to challenge the world champion Gary Kasparov. Even if Short loses, he will already be assured of

earning £1 million in prize money.

Kasparov has shown himself a most worthy and indeed outstanding world champion. In the new-year ranking list issued by the World Chess Federation he has broken his previous ratings record of 2,800, advancing his new rating to 2,805 points. In the

history of chess the only other player to have come close to this is Bobby Fischer, who reached 2,785 points in 1972.

This year was also notable for the return of Fischer in a match carrying a world-record purse against his old foe Boris Spassky, held in the former Yugoslavia. Fischer triumphed by ten wins to five and earned himself the winner's slice of the purse — over £2 million.

The Hastings event, founded in 1895, is the oldest traditional tournament in the world. This year's event is an elite contest for eight players run on a double-round format and the main attraction is Judit Polgar, 16, the prodigy from Hungary. Polgar broke Bobby Fischer's record, which had stood since 1958, by becoming the youngest grandmaster.

The line-up facing her includes last year's winner, Evgeny Bareev from Moscow, and British grandmasters Jon Speelman and John Nunn. Perhaps the most exciting prospect for British chess at Hastings is our own prodigy Matthew Sadler, 18, from Rochester, who has challenged Polgar in the past and, with a good result, could become Britain's youngest grandmaster. Hastings continues until January 13.

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Murder of captain prompts warning on high seas piracy

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

THE body of a British sea captain murdered by pirates in the South China Sea has been flown home for burial as the government moved to issue a written piracy warning, the first in modern maritime history.

Captain John Bashforth, 45, of Hathersage, north Derbyshire, was shot in the head after refusing to hand over money when his ship, the *Baltimar Zephyr*, was boarded on December 11 by five men as it sailed off Indonesia with a cargo of mining equipment.

Captain Bashforth will be buried at his parish church, said his younger brother, Bob Bashforth, a Chesterfield solicitor. He said: "My brother is the sort of guy to grit his teeth and tell them to go jump in the sea. He was utterly devoted to duty. I don't think he could have handed anything over on the ship and live with his conscience, but unfortunately it cost him his life."

Captain Bashforth joined the merchant service at 17 and rose through the ranks to captain by his mid-thirties. His first officer, a Filipino, was also killed in what is thought to be the ninety-third pirate attack this year.

Seventy-five of the raids on merchant ships were in Asian waters and 53 of these were off Indonesia, according to the regional anti-piracy centre at the Malaysian capital of Kuala Lumpur, established by the International Maritime Bureau in October.

The written government warning to be made early in the new year by the transport department is expected to advise on how to reduce the risk of attack through high-profile deck patrols, with searchlights at night, and to stress the importance of complying with pirates' demands once measures to deter them from boarding have failed.

The government will also advise masters to contact search and rescue co-ordination centres such as the British coastguard system and sail immediately to the nearest port for forensic science examination of their vessels and to help collect evidence.

The government is to pro-

Although modern pirates use the latest technology to find victims, their violence matches that of their predecessors

more collaboration with other seafaring nations within the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), the United Nations agency responsible for safe shipping, but has rejected calls in the House of Lords earlier this year for an international naval force under the auspices of the UN. Although few of the victims are British-registered ships, a high proportion of the crews is British.

Circumstantial evidence indicates that some of the pirates, who operate by night with advanced maritime technology in fast launches, are gamekeepers turned poachers. They are alleged to include some Indonesian servicemen



Steer clear: pirates who kill to steal

and customs officers, sometimes still in uniform, who have abandoned the traditional Blackbeard outlaws for M16 rifles to launch attacks in the busy shipping lanes approaching Singapore harbour, especially in the vicinity of Bintan Island.

Royal Navy warships are on alert for piracy but cannot intervene within 12-mile territorial waters.

The government's moves coincide with a growing determination on the part of agencies such as the International Shipping Federation (ISF), which represents the employers, and the International Maritime Bureau (IMB), the specialist anti-

crime division of the International Chamber of Commerce, to eliminate piracy.

Representatives of the two bodies will be among a task-force summoned by the IMO to Singapore for an into piracy in February.

Meanwhile a meeting will be held in London on January 14 to discuss the enquiry's terms of reference which may include recourse to a convoy system for shipping.

David Dearsley, secretary of the ISF, said: "The murder of Captain Bashforth is particularly worrying because of the degree of violence involved. There are two ways of tackling piracy. The first is a diplomatic initiative. Piracy has got to be tackled with the administrations at the source of the problem. That means essentially embarrassing governments where it is necessary. Indonesia is poor at policing its own waters. The other thing is to give practical advice on what to do to make it more difficult for pirates to get on board."

Meanwhile Eric Ellen, director of the IMB, spoke against the arming of crews and argued instead for sophisticated training of seamen and their officers.

"It's no good turning ships into battlefields. You may have a firearm and the next thing is that the pirates come on board with bazookas. The trouble is that a seaman doesn't know how to handle the situation when someone puts a gun in his mouth and says 'I'm going to blow your head off'."

A spokesman for Numast, the merchant navy officers' union, described Captain Bashforth's death as a tragedy waiting to happen and said: "Pirate attacks in this part of the world are often carried out with absolute military precision. Some are by ex-military and some certainly are by current naval personnel working freelance. There is a dire lack of law enforcement in this area and Captain Bashforth paid dearly for this."



Lease of life: derelict stables, part of which will be converted into houses for sale, and part let to a polo ground



Baroque grandeur: Stoneleigh Abbey, whose front was built in the 1720s, is to be bought by Kit Martin, left

Stoneleigh Abbey finds a saviour

By MARCUS BINNEY, ARCHITECTURE CORRESPONDENT

KIT MARTIN, the Sir Galahad of the distressed country house, is to acquire and restore Stoneleigh Abbey, the grandest Georgian mansion in Warwickshire. Mr Martin has restored eight such ancestral seats in the past 12 years and recently purchased another vast baroque house, Burley-on-the-Hill.

Under Mr Martin's scheme the main state rooms at Stoneleigh will be reopened to the public and the rest of the abbey, its stables and out-

buildings will be adapted as individual houses for 35 families to live in.

Lady Leigh, whose husband's family have owned Stoneleigh since the 16th century, said: "This will breathe life back into a sleeping giant. The house was vested in a preservation trust, but there simply wasn't enough money to go on opening and maintaining it."

Mr Martin said: "I have long been looking for a house where I could show that

residential conversion could go hand in hand with public access. The cost of proper endowments for the National Trust, or any trust, is now so great that alternative solutions must be found."

The baroque front of Stoneleigh is a colossus, four storeys high and 15 windows wide and was built for the Leighs in the 1720s to the designs of the master builder Francis Smith of Warwick. Smith retained much of the Elizabethan house as well as the handsome 14th century abbey gateway. When Jane Austen visited in 1806 she found "26 bedchambers in the new part of the house and a great many (some very good ones) in the old".

Mr Martin plans for the main state rooms, with magnificent panelling and plasterwork, to be preserved with their furniture and opened by the preservation trust, and for the upper floors and ranges around the courtyard to be converted and sold on 125-year leases.

The abbey's recent history has been a chapter of misfortunes. In 1960, a fire started

in the guildhall, spread through the upper floors and destroyed the roof. Although the state rooms survived relatively undamaged, restoration began only in 1982, after the establishment of a preservation trust on the late Lord Leigh's death in 1979.

Furniture had to be sold to raise funds for restoration. Modern offices created in the upper floors failed to attract a single tenant in ten years. Stoneleigh was eventually forced to close its doors to the public. Recently the huge battlemented stables of Regency date have started to collapse.

Mr Martin said: "The scheme will provide sufficient funds for all necessary repairs to the abbey and estate buildings, including the wall gardens and follies. We will construct 20 new houses on the site of ugly modern barns. Part of the stables will be let to a nearby polo ground."

Lady Leigh approached Mr Martin after plans to convert the abbey into a hotel fell through. Now a hotel is to be built at a distance from the house.

Scientist confirms pumas are roaming Britain

By JULIA LLEWELLYN SMITH

IF you go down to the woods today, working off your Christmas pudding, you may be in for a big surprise. Experts say that strange cat-like creatures spotted in all corners of the British Isles are almost certainly pumas and lynxes that have escaped from captivity, and not the figment of an imagination that has seen one festive sherry too many.

Wildcats have been spotted over the past 12 months in places as far apart as the Peak District, Bodmin Moor in Cornwall, Merthyr Tydfil in Mid Glamorgan and Hampstead, north London. The sightings have become so common that experts are taking them seriously. Dr Paul Shuker, zoologist and author of *Mysterious Cats of the World*, said yesterday: "There is little doubt that there are quite a few British wildcats roaming the countryside."

As proof, Dr Shuker shares his West Bromwich home with a stuffed jungle cat that was run down in Ludlow, Shropshire, in 1989. Normally such cats are found in the Middle East and Asia. "The cat had been living in the wild, having escaped from some zoo that the authorities will not name. It is perfectly preserved," he said. Another jungle cat was run over and killed in Hampshire in 1988.

Britain has only one native wild feline, the Scottish wildcat, which is also the only protected species. The official line on sightings of other cats is almost invariably that they are misidentified dogs. Dr Shuker disagrees. "The police haven't got the opportunity to investigate fully. And the cat has all the advantages, because it knows the terrain well and is very elusive. It is only when one is killed or trapped that we can prove they exist."

According to Dr Shuker, taxidermists who have examined hairs left by the Beast of Exmoor, the cat-like animal that has killed hundreds of sheep in the West Country since 1983, have identified them as belonging to pumas or lynxes. The pattern of sightings across the moors is said to follow the paths of deer migration.

The Dangerous Wild Animals Act of 1976 put severe restrictions on the keeping of wild animals. Owners must pay a substantial annual licence to keep a wildcat. Unlicensed cats who escape from small private collections are therefore unlikely to be reported to the authorities.

Pumas and lynxes inhabit the polar regions and can easily adapt to the British climate, though they should be approached with care. Despite having plenty of suitable prey at their disposal, such as deer and rabbits, they are likely to attack humans.

Force seven makes for an up and down sort of Christmas

IT WAS certainly a Christmas to remember, in the middle of an ocean with the nearest people 160 miles away, and a force seven wind blowing with snow showers.

We were probably the last people to celebrate, being so close to the international date line, but not so close as to lose Christmas day altogether, which would have been a real shame, although a novel experience.

The planning began before we left Southampton. Robert having arranged some tinned chickens, a gift from William Grant & Sons of Glasgow. The atmosphere became more festive as telex messages arrived for everyone and we all booked calls home.

The radio chat-show with the rest of the fleet was full of greetings to and from all, plus the occasional carol with updated words. Most topical of all were references to rigging failures and wishes for a new mast for British Steel II. The best news was that she had made a rendezvous with a ship to take on enough fuel to reach New Zealand.

We arranged our own carol service, led by Brian, who had written out the hymn sheets from memory, apart from missing out a complete line from *Flare, the Herald Angels Sing*. During this the wind piped up and a second reef was put in the mainsail, followed by a nip of sherry all round, provided by Sam.

Sam and Robert were our chefs for the day and took it in turns to prepare stuffing — two varieties, one with haggis — and croquette potatoes. My own contribution was to make

Celebrations had a strange but memorable feel for the crews in the British Steel Challenge round the world race. Vivien Cherry, skipper of Coopers & Lybrand, reports



Coopers & Lybrand

the mince pies, using the still half-full sherry bottle as a rolling pin and the top of a jam pot to cut the pastry. The flavour was about right, but whenever I make them they ooze juice and filling all over the oven.

We continued sailing all day, changing constantly to the most favoured tack so that, just when the galley was organised for cooking uphill, it switched to downhill. This caused a couple of cupboards to open unawares. Flying food, mugs and dishes added another dimension to the complex obstacle course and caused a few more bruised behinds.

We made an effort to decorate the saloon with balloons, Christmas cards, a six-inch tree given to us by Coopers & Lybrand, and copious use of tinfoil.

Dinner took place in two sittings to keep enough food hot at any one time. Soup was followed by chicken and the traditional pudding, the lurching of the boat ensuring that it was doused with extra brandy to set it alight.

Even that small amount of

drink went straight to most people's heads and the silly games began. Presents were thin on the ground and I for one would have really appreciated the good old regulars' socks and gloves, preferably warm, thick ones. At home they are the sort of present I buy when I am lost for other ideas; in future I will cherish such gifts just by remembering this very different Christmas.

Coopers & Lybrand's Rio office had given each of us a piece of gemstone: mine was black tourmaline, or schod, the metaphysical properties of which are said to offer personal protection against negative energies, and to help to support spiritual consciousness under adverse conditions.

How very appropriate. This lovely, thoughtful gesture was much appreciated by everyone.

We now have fewer than 1,700 miles to go to Hobart, Tasmania, and everyone is in great spirits. Christmas was a truly strange and memorable day, one never likely to be repeated and certainly never forgotten.

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A Community open for business means opportunity for some, redundancy for others

Europe stands at border of a year free from barriers

FROM GEORGE BROCK IN BRUSSELS

AS EUROPE'S citizens return to their offices this week, small bands of business leaders, visionaries and Eurocrats across the EC are gathering wood for fires. As the year ends, a chain of beacons across Europe will signify the end of a six-year bonfire of the boundaries.

December 31 marks the deadline of the European Community's sprawling programme to end restrictions on the free movement inside 12 states of anything from widgets to wombats. Europe, as the trade department's consciousness-raising television ads of the mid-1980s used to say, is open for business.

Up to a point. Even the most starchy-eyed idealists admit that "1992" is a process, not an event, and their unfinished business is to be tidied up. Many hindrances have already gone: money slashes around Europe's financial markets as fast as the dealers can move currencies round their computer screens. We buy French, Italian and German foods and load them into Peugeot and Fiat to take them back to a home mortgaged by a company in Frankfurt.

Some frontiers will still stand on Friday. Few airports have been converted to borderless travel for EC passengers and Britain is locked in a dispute with its partners over whether EC citizens have to wave their passports at immigration officers. Duty-free shops survive for four more years, although their *raison d'être* vanishes on January 1.

The single market programme followed the pattern of the EC's success stories. A small handful of men and women develop a visionary plan to fulfil an original objective decades behind schedule, which at first attracts little attention anywhere

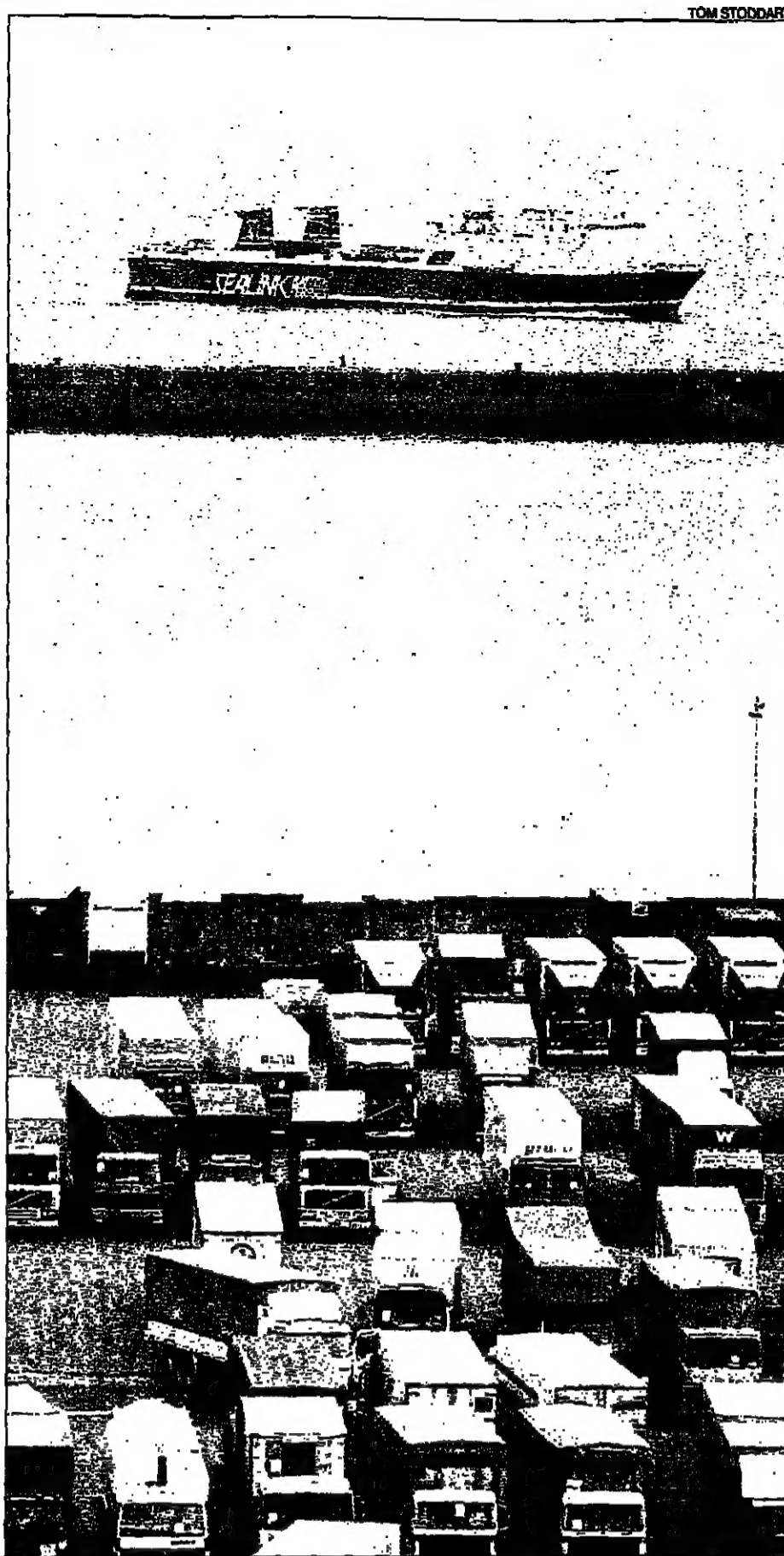
and none at all in Britain. But the idea develops unstoppable political momentum. Its success inspires other states outside the EC to join in. Lastly, and crucially, the entire scheme fits wider trends in the world outside.

Jacques Delors and Lord Cockfield, the Commission's single market planner, set a deadline, skilfully simplified and repackaged the legal framework and seized imaginations from Sicily to Shetland.

Lord Cockfield quickly grasped that the single market programme was not confined to loosening trade barriers, a deduction for which he was never forgiven by Baroness Thatcher. Encouraging deep economic integration would pull businesses towards a common or single currency and political integration. True free movement of people meant aligning rules on education and professional qualification, improving language teaching and other measures of social integration a long way distant from free trade rules.

Neither federalists nor free traders saw their prescriptions fulfilled. During 1992 the EC has strengthened the protectionist fence of tariffs and quotas.

M Delors and his followers have likewise been disappointed. The politicians have produced the tortuous compromise of the Maastricht treaty and discovered that even that step forward is too far for many voters. The divisions over this only illustrate what made the 1992 vision so successful. Its architects concentrated on economics, where EC integration has been relatively successful, and not on politics, where results have been slow and messy. The architects laid out the playing field but did not try to run the game.



Ready to go: lorries at Dover awaiting embarkation on ferries to the Continent

Jobs tumble over the edge of Dover's white cliffs

BY IAN MURRAY

FIREWORK parties and certificates to welcome what Dover Harbour Board describes as the dawn of a new era have been arranged in the town to mark the opening of Europe's internal frontiers.

The festivities will be short-lived in Britain's principal port for trade and traffic with the Continent. Mass unemployment looms as a consequence of what is happening and there are fears that without generous government aid the area will become one of the most depressed in Britain as the European Community's internal borders are abolished.

Unemployment in east Kent is already higher than in Scotland or Wales. "It is just a sick joke around here to talk of the prosperous South East," according to Dover Chamber of Commerce. Christopher Jackson, the MEP for Kent East, was met with an almost silent reception at the chamber's Christmas dinner when he gave a speech welcoming the "new era".

Opening the frontiers means that the jobs of 1,300 customs brokers have been eliminated overnight. Already 400 customs officers have had to be given early retirement or redeployed. Another 150 lose their posts from January 1. The frontier formalities have required staff and services which have been worth £30 million a year to the local economy. Now that money is gone, traders are facing a bleak future.

The imminent completion of the Channel tunnel is adding to the gloom. At its peak, the construction site created 8,000 jobs but these are being cut. When the tunnel opens, the ferries and related companies will face inevitable cuts even though they have already shed nearly half their crews over the past three or four years.

According to the East Kent Initiative, set up 18 months ago to confront these problems, "Together with the abolition of frontier controls, the

impact [of the tunnel] will be the equivalent to the closure of a steelworks such as Corby or Consett. Throughout east Kent the economy is fragile and unemployment levels are high... The one stronger area, Dover, is now threatened with major job losses over the next few years. The existing situation is poor and the outlook worse."

The Dover Harbour Board boasts that it handles one sailing every 20 minutes, day and night, and that it handles 21 per cent of Britain's foreign trade. The 16 million passengers passing through make it the busiest terminal in the world, with 2.4 million cars, 126,000 coaches and over a million lorries processed annually by a staff of 800. The customs clearance companies shift freight through the docks with scarcely more than a five-minute delay, a record which, they boast, is better than on any comparable EC border.

Martin Hemmingsway, the general manager of the East Kent Initiative, speaks frankly. "Viewed from here, the start of the single market is not a joyful day. When you see people who do their job more efficiently than anyone else in Europe being put out of work, you can't help but be gloomy."

A second survey this year by the Canterbury Business School at Kent University has concluded that the mood of companies working in the field of customs clearance has become defeatist since March. It said: "They are effectively becoming resigned to their fate."

Most employees in these companies are under 30 and skilled in the use of computers and at least half speak one or more foreign languages. Few have worked long enough to obtain enough redundancy money to set up their own businesses and comparable work does not exist in Dover, which has been a one-industry town centred on the port for centuries.

Tracksuit man sought over rape

Detectives hunting the rapist of a 14-year-old girl in co. Durham want to speak to a track-suited man. They believe that he was the last person to see the victim before she was attacked.

The girl was delivering newspapers in her village when she was attacked at 8am on December 19. Police said a reward offered for an arrest and conviction had risen to £14,000 after a donation from the car-dealer Sir Tom Cowie, who lives near the village.

Det. Chief Inspector Max Currah said: "It is imperative that I speak to a man seen in the area wearing a dark tracksuit with a peppermint-green stripe." The man is described as aged between 17 and early 20s, about 5ft 9in tall, with black or brown straight hair.

End of line
Leatherslade farmhouse, near Oakley, Buckinghamshire, the hide-out of the Great Train Robbers in 1963, is to be demolished. Planners have given the owner permission to build a house on the site.

Man set on fire

Mohammed Sadiq, 30, a used car dealer, is seriously ill in hospital after being discovered alight on Saturday evening behind his parents' home in the Almondsbury area of Huddersfield. Police wish to question a man who called at the house a short time beforehand.

Lone challenge

Tom McNally, 49, from Liverpool, sailed past Cape St Vincent in his 5ft 4in craft to try to beat a 24-year-old record for the smallest boat to cross the Atlantic.

Squirrel bridge

A £50,000 bridge is to be built for a colony of red squirrels when a dual carriageway is built on the Southport-Liverpool road at Ince Blundell, cutting through a wood.

Bond winners

Winners of weekly premium bond draw: £100,000, number LB 920080, from Glasgow (holding of £75); £50,000, 10SP 923498, Edinburgh (£100); £25,000, 34BN 664722, Lincoln (£3,007).

Clowns find old and new ways to make 'em laugh

BY KATE ALDERSON

THE traditional British circus is under siege. The first female clown to perform here made her debut this Christmas and a circus school has started to entertain party-goers with a "Techno Circus".

Steven Taylor, co-founder of the Kent Circus School, and his performing troupe regularly provide entertainment at parties all over Britain. "We are promoting the energy and vitality of the circus. We juggle, do acrobatics and pole, do stunts on a stage. The music and lights of the party are integrated into our show—it's becoming very popular."

Mr Taylor says the traditional circus is in decline. Gerry Cottle, whose show opened at Wembley on Christmas eve, disagrees. His circus has all the hardy perennials—animals, trapeze acts, a strongman and clowns. His Christmas ticket sales are up by half on last year.

He admits the furore he caused by bringing Baby D,

alias Danise Payne, from America last month put his circus in the spotlight. British clowns picketed her arrival at Heathrow, angry that Mr Cottle had claimed there were only three funny clowns in Britain and dismissed the rest as "unoriginal and prima donnas".

Mr Cottle said: "I have no regrets about bringing her here. She is a talented clown, a breath of fresh air, and the publicity has worked both ways." Mr Cottle wants clowns to help promote his circus, which he says many British clowns refuse to do. Last week Baby D entertained children in a hospital and at a school.

Before his recent publicity coup, Mr Cottle had had a bad year. Animal rights campaigners protested over his shows and many local authorities have banned his circuses because they fear that he is exploiting animals. He denies the charge and says that his animals are well cared for. During the mid-1980s he

bowed to pressure and stopped using animals in his shows, but ticket sales fell and they were re-introduced.

Malcolm Clay, of the Association of Circus Proprietors of Great Britain, says conventional circuses are the most successful: "Those without the traditional elements, particularly animals, are struggling. The public do like to see animals if they are happy and content, and don't like to see them do intricate tricks. The non-animal circuses are probably interesting for only half an hour."

Mr Clay agrees with Mr Cottle's views about British clowns, of which there are only about 12 full-time professionals and 400 "weekenders". He says: "There are some funny British clowns and some terrible ones. Some have no originality of thought. People want excitement from the circus, a thrill, and that's what has kept them coming back for more than 200 years."

The way it isn't

CHRIS BROWN



Next Year in Fall

January 1: Madonna shocks the world with a new book, *PEX*, in which she advocates kissing on the cheek. At the launch party, she appears fully clothed, passing unrecognised through the crowd.

January 5: Norman Tebbit condemns the Dalai Lama. "Isn't it about time this absurd little man wore something half-way decent and went out and got a proper job rather than telling us all how we should run our lives?" he says, adding: "If this is what Maastricht means, then count me out."

January 24: Archbishop of Canterbury seeks closer co-operation with atheists. "We have a lot to learn from them," he insists. "After all, it would be awfully arrogant for us to insist that God definitely existed. Pass the tambourine, there's a love."

February 4: a new tape of the royal family printed by *The Sun* astounds the world. It reveals them as they have never been heard before, talking to one another quite happily and apparently getting on perfectly well. A palace spokesman claims it is an obvious fake.

February 9: as part of John Birt's attempt to make the BBC upmarket, *Eldorado* signs up Roland Rat.

February 18: award-winning artist Damien Hirst draws praise from art critics for his drawing of a human face with two circles for eyes, a triangle for a nose and a curved line for a mouth. "It's his most sophisticated work yet," declares the Saatchi Gallery. "All it needs now is some cow innards in the corner, and it'll be ready to exhibit."

February 27: Tony Slattery doesn't appear on television. "This could be an end to TV as we know it," comments Michael Grade.



That's show business: Dingle Fingle backstage at Gerry Cottle's Wembley circus.

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High court challenges Israeli decision to bar aid for deportees

FROM DONNA ABU-NASR IN MARJ AZ-ZAHOUR

ISRAEL'S high court gave the government 72 hours to answer a challenge to a cabinet decision barring humanitarian aid through Israeli lines to the 415 Palestinian deportees trapped in no man's land, the justice ministry said. But twice already the court has rejected legal challenges.

Israel told the United Nations yesterday that it would not back down from its decision to expel the Palestinians. Meanwhile, the men stranded in a now snow-blanketed tent city between Israeli and Lebanese troops received smuggled supplies that eased their food shortage.

The supplies, taken on donkeys across mountain trails, coincided with the arrival in Jerusalem of a United Nations envoy trying to end the ordeal of the men expelled by Israel ten days ago. James Jonah, the UN under-secretary-general, was trying to persuade Israel to take back the deportees or allow humanitarian organisations to provide them with supplies. He met Yitzhak

Rabin, the prime minister, and Shimon Peres, the foreign minister.

Gad Ben-Ari, a spokesman for Yitzhak Rabin, said that the expulsion order was "a sovereign decision of Israel. It is a final decision and it is not up for discussion". Israel radio said that Mr Jonah would not be allowed to visit the Palestinians via Israel's self-proclaimed security zone in southern Lebanon.

It could not be determined whether Lebanon would allow him to visit the Palestinians tomorrow. He was expected to meet the Palestinian delegates to the Middle East peace talks before going to the deportees' camp.

The Palestinians spent the day melting snow gathered in large pots for drinking water, throwing snowballs, exercising to warm up and appealing for the evacuation of a seriously wounded comrade. Earlier, they said they had distributed their last food rations on Saturday and might be able to eke them out for two or three

days. They cheered when a food-laden donkey entered their makeshift camp about noon carrying dozens of tins of peas, beans and jam as well as cheese and yoghurt, eggs, bread and a skinned calf. Villagers from the central Bekaa Valley, renowned for smuggling goods across the border with neighbouring Syria, also walked through olive groves carrying plastic canisters full of paraffin for the Palestinians' heaters.

After unloading the supplies into their tent warehouse, the refugees started cooking potatoes and meat using butane gas cylinders apparently smuggled before daylight. Hussein Abu Kweir, the Palestinians' storekeeper, said the supplies were smuggled by "sympathisers".

A Lebanese army officer at the Marj az-Zahour checkpoint, three miles north of the camp, said there was no way to prevent smuggling across the chain of mountains overlooking the no man's land abutting Israel's "security zone". He said villagers passing through his checkpoint can transport supplies for their own use and the army has no reason to confiscate them. Both Lebanon and Israel have refused to let humanitarian organisations take food, water, heating fuel, medicine and other necessities to the Muslims.

The men got their last supplies from the Red Cross last Tuesday before Lebanon halted relief aid in an apparent effort to put pressure on Israel to take them back. On Friday, Mr Rabin's government rejected an appeal by the International Committee of the Red Cross to allow humanitarian aid to the deportees via Israel-controlled south Lebanon. He said aid could be brought in from Beirut, Rafik Hariri, the Lebanese prime minister, on Saturday.



day urged President Bush and Bill Clinton, the US president-elect, to use their influence with Israel to rescind the mass expulsion order.

Omair Farawneh, a doctor, said Amjad Zamel, a fellow exile suffering from shrapnel wounds in the jaw, was in a critical condition. "Brother Zamel's wounds are infected and he might lose his lower jaw. We plead with the UN secretary-general to help us in evacuating him to any place, be it Lebanon or Israel. He needs surgery," Dr Farawneh said.

Mr Zamel was one of nine people taken by Lebanese troops from hospital on Saturday and ordered to return to the camp. He was wounded on Monday by mortar shelling from the Israelis or the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army while the Palestinians tried to march back into the security zone. Abdul Aziz Rantisi, a Gaza physician, pleaded with Mr Jonah to visit us to see for himself the extent of the tragedy and relay his finding to the UN secretary-general.

Two representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's mainstream Fatah faction also sneaked through the mountains past Lebanese checkpoints to visit the deportees and talk to their leaders. (AP)



Four-footed relief: a Palestinian deportee riding a donkey used by smugglers to bring supplies to the 415 Muslims at their makeshift and snow-covered tent camp in no man's land. Both Israel and Lebanon have refused to let through humanitarian aid to the men

Delhi decides to build mosque and temple at Ayodhya

BY CHRISTOPHER THOMAS AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

THE Indian government last night decided to buy the site of the mosque in Ayodhya, destroyed by militant Hindus, and build a mosque and a Hindu temple there.

"The government will issue an ordinance this week to acquire the disputed land empowering itself to build a mosque and a temple," an official announcement issued after the cabinet had met twice during the weekend said. "The government's aim is to ensure that the balance of both [Hindu and Muslim] communities is maintained," it said.

A government spokesman said the cabinet had decided to refer to the president the question of seeking the supreme court's opinion on whether there had been a Hindu temple on the site where the mosque stood. The cabinet met as hundreds of Hindu extremists began gathering in the holy city of Ayodhya to perform *yajna* (prayer rituals) at the site of the demolished Babri mosque. The demolition of the mosque in Ayodhya in the state of Uttar Pradesh this month triggered a wave of sectarian violence across India, in which at least 1,200 people have been killed.

At the weekend the police set up barricades to keep out the pilgrims, who want to worship gods whose statues were erected in a makeshift shrine after the mosque was pulled down on December 6. According to the police, more than 3,000 Hindu zealots courted arrest

in Ayodhya and its sister city, Faizabad, on Saturday.

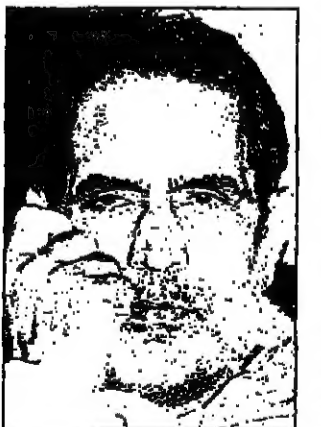
The high court in Allahabad, which has jurisdiction over Ayodhya, is due to rule tomorrow whether to allow prayer ceremonies at the site. Ultimately, it will have to be a political decision.

The government may be forced to allow prayers to avoid playing into the hands of the hardline Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which was involved in the destruction of the mosque. The party is threatening to lead protest marches to Ayodhya unless prayers are permitted. The cabinet discussed Muslim demands that only a mosque should be built on the site of the old one. Clearly it had no intention of giving permission, for fear of inflaming Hindu opinion.

Moderate Hindu organisations are urging the government not to allow prayers on the disputed site. Eleven political parties and 35 grass-roots organisations announced plans on Saturday for a nationwide campaign to mobilise public opinion against intercommunal fighting. It is supported by two former prime ministers, Vishwanath Pratap Singh and Chandra Shekhar, who will address rallies across the country. The campaign will try to discredit the extremist Hindutva ("Hinduness") movement as a distortion of Hinduism.

In Islamabad, the Pakistani government announced last night that it had started to rebuild hundreds of Hindu temples damaged or destroyed by Muslims. The government has also promised unspecified compensation to Hindu families whose homes and businesses were set on fire by Muslim gangs seeking revenge for destruction of the Ayodhya mosque.

The mosque's demolition created a backlash in Islamic Pakistan that badly damaged or destroyed at least 260 Hindu temples, according to the government. Most of the temples are in southern Sindh province, where Pakistan's 800,000 Hindus are concentrated, or in eastern Punjab province bordering India.



Chandra Shekhar drive to halt religious riots

Somali gunmen die in raid on UN

FROM FRANCES KERRY IN MOGADISHU

TWO Somali gunmen were killed and several others were injured during a shoot-out at a United Nations compound in north Mogadishu, a spokesman for the UN announced yesterday.

News of Saturday's attack on a compound housing UN military observers came as the city's two rival warlords agreed to dismantle the "green line" war boundary, dividing the Somali capital and to halt clan fighting in and around Mogadishu. It coincided with Washington's plans for the American-led multinational humanitarian task force in the East African country to establish a firm presence in the north of the city and hunt down heavy weapons in both parts of Mogadishu.

Farouk Mawlawi, spokesman for the UN relief operation, said men with machine-guns and rocket-launchers attacked a compound housing five UN military observers. Somali guards returned fire. The multinational task force sent assistance in the form of American F18 jets which flew over the area. The observers were evacuated from the compound by Pakistani UN peacekeepers. The motive for the attack was not known, Mr Mawlawi said.

The incident illustrated continuing security problems in Mogadishu, a city wrecked by civil war and divided since the rival warlords, General Muhammad Farrah Aidid and General Ali Mahdi Muhammad, turned their guns on each other after uniting to remove the former dictator, Mohamed Siad Barre, in January 1991. Gen Aidid controls territory in the south of the city; Gen Ali Mahdi has an enclave in the north.

A senior American official said they agreed at a meeting on Saturday to tear down the green line and stop clashes between clans in and around Mogadishu. Fighting between the two rivals has caused much of the devastation that led to severe famine in southern and central Somalia.

The two men also agreed at their meeting to lead a peace rally through Mogadishu tomorrow. (Reuters)

Opposition tribal splits will help Moi keep grip on power

FROM SAM KILEY IN NAIROBI

CAMPAIGNING in Kenya's first multiparty elections ends today amid high political tension as the country faces grave economic problems and the threat of inter-tribal warfare.

Nearly 1,000 people have died in politically motivated tribal clashes since political pluralism was announced a year ago. Thirty were killed in fighting between opposition groups and supporters of Daniel arap Moi, Kenya's president for the past 14 years, since the race for tomorrow's elections opened last month.

The leading opposition parties a year ago missed the opportunity of combining under the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (Ford). But Ford split along tribal lines producing Ford-Kenya, led by Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, a Luo, and Ford-Asili, led by Kenneth Matiba, a Kikuyu. The other main anti-Moi force is the Democratic party under Mwai Kibaki, a Kikuyu and former vice-president responsible for creating Mr Moi's one-party state who resigned from the cabinet this year. The

tribal divisions are likely to give Mr Moi the edge in the elections. A presidential winner needs to take over 50 per cent of votes to avoid a run-off as well as 25 per cent in five of the eight Kenyan provinces.

Ford-Kenya, under Mr Odinga, Kenya's first vice-president, has accused the government of printing money to buy votes. Ford, along with the Democratic party and other opposition groups, has claimed that the import of Kenyan bank notes printed by the British currency manufacturers, the De La Rue, has driven up Kenya's money supply by 40 per cent over the past year and, by 75 per cent in the last quarter of 1992.

Foreign exchange earnings have plummeted as a result of a 40 per cent drop in tourist bookings to the former British colony which otherwise relied on exports of tea and coffee to bolster its balance of payments. Inflation is officially running at 30 per cent and is probably nearer 40 per cent.

After bowing to international political pressure combined

with the aid donors' decision to cut balance of payments support (worth £26 million a month) and other financial support, President Moi agreed to legalise opposition parties last December. He did so after warning that political freedom would bring chaos to the East African country. This came in the middle of the year in fighting between members of his Kalenjin tribe and others in the Rift Valley, the former "White Highlands", and in the port city of Kisumu on Lake Victoria in which hundreds of people were killed and thousands made homeless when their houses were destroyed in fires.

Opposition groups accused the government of organising private armies to do its dirty work. These accusations have increased with allegations that George Saitoti, the vice-president, a Masai, has been training men about 100 miles south of Nairobi, and that Nicholas Biwot, a Kalenjin, the former energy and industry minister who Scotland Yard named as a main suspect in the killing of the foreign minister, Robert Ouko, was doing the same in his constituency of Kericho South, about 100 miles northeast of Kisumu.

The very fact that the allegations are being bandied about means that both the opposition and the government are squaring up for what may come to violence, a senior Western diplomat said. Weapons have flooded into Kenya from the civil war in Somalia. Two years ago weapons were rare in this country - now an AK47 costs about \$65 in Nairobi's back streets.

At least nine of the 188 seats have already been decided in favour of the ruling Kenya African National Union, because opposition candidates were allegedly prevented from registering, and another eight referred to the courts for arbitration after the elections. At least another 22 opposition candidates switched their allegiances to Kanu after registration. Mr Moi's opponents claim that £9,800 has been offered to opposition figures to switch allegiance, but recently withdrew a threat to boycott the elections. Commonwealth observers, led by Judge Telford Georges of Jamaica, have voiced serious reservations about the conduct of the elections.



Eye on the future: Kenneth Matiba, the opposition leader, ending his campaign at the weekend

NEWS IN BRIEF

Muslims kill 18 Catholics

Cotabato City: Muslim bandits in the Philippines killed 18 Roman Catholic church workers on Christmas Day as they met to discuss the festivities, the army said.

Soldiers were searching for the killers in jungle around Carmen and Pikit, in north Cotabato province. Colonel Jose Valencia said the victims had been holding a meeting in a school in Carmen when the Muslims barged in and opened fire, killing 16. Two others died later. (Reuters)

Peace protest

Vitoria: Thousands of people in this Basque city joined hands in a human chain to reject terrorism. The demonstration, under the slogan "In peace there is room for everybody", was organised by four local pacifist groups. (AP)

Gunman hurt

Bastle: A gunman dressed as Father Christmas and said to be a millionaire's son kidnapped a woman from a villa near here, but was shot by police when his car was stopped. The hostage was unhurt. (AFP)

Fire escape

Sydney: Forty people were rescued after fire trapped them in the upper floors and on the roof of a hotel in Sydney's King's Cross tourist and entertainment district. Four people were hurt. (Reuters)

Poll approved

Niamey: Niger's citizens have voted overwhelmingly in favour of a new constitution that calls for the west African country's first free elections since independence from France in 1960. (Reuters)

Five missing

Bangkok: Five people were still missing after a floating pier at the Menam Hotel overturned and pitched hundreds of party revellers into the fast-flowing Chao Phya River here. (Reuters)

Storm survivors

Brisbane: About a dozen people missing since a cyclone struck northern Australia's Cape York peninsula on Christmas Day have been found unharmed. (Reuters)

Tibet talks

Paris: A Tibetan delegation has been set up with a view to meeting Chinese officials in Peking and eventually opening talks on Tibet's future. The Dalai Lama said in an interview published in the *Le Monde*. (AFP)

Art retrieved

Bologna: Italian police have recovered about 20 drawings, including two by Degas, that were stolen three weeks ago from a museum at Ferrara. The drawings were valued at £6.3 million. (AFP)

Crest of wave

Paris: Jacques Cousteau, the oceanographer, is the most popular person in France for the fifth year in succession, according to an annual opinion poll. Abbe Pierre, a priest who has given his life to the poor, is second. (Reuters)

Vietnam conquered by neon, nylon and stilettos

FROM JOANNA PITMAN IN HO CHI MINH CITY

THE lights are low but the suede heels and the hair-styles are fashionably high in Ho Chi Minh's Peace Ballroom. Here in Vietnam's biggest dance hall, the proud home of the country's only revolving stage, like young bodies sheathed in skin-tight black leather and leopard-skin prints sway on Saturday evenings to the mellifluous tenor voice of Nguyen Thanh Gian, Vietnam's answer to Cliff Richard.

Outside on the street, purple neon and twinkling fairy lights beckon passers-by and teeming bouncers loll about, teasing the teddy-boy hairdos they have built up with a

squirt of egg-white under the hairdryer. Rows and rows of Honda motorcycles gleam in the winking lights and occasionally a large Toyota limousine rolls up to deposit a party of women dressed in little more than negligees, and the legendary gentlemen of Vietnam's nouveau riche class, who are reputed to spend £600 or so for a night on the town.

Even if the famous revolving stage does shudder to a grinding halt once in a while, falling victim to one of the city's frequent power cuts, the Peace Ballroom is not a bad effort for an authoritarian communist-ruled country that set out on the road to free enterprise and a market-driven economy only six

years ago under the "Doi Moi" policies. Vietnam's version of perestroika.

Inside the smoke-filled dance hall, Gian has switched to a jerk and bump number and dancing girls totter in four-inch stilettos through a cloud of dry ice on to the stage where they perform a synchronised routine of gyrations without noticeable enjoyment, their eyes sweeping through the audience like searchlights on the hunt for moneyed foreign businessmen.

Thao Dung is 23 and the proud holder of the "Miss Fashion Ho Chi Minh 1992" title. She has been dancing for four years at the Peace Ballroom and earns £3 a night, a fortune compared to

her father who earns only twice that in a month of making felt pens in a small suburban factory. Ms Dung shares half her pay with her parents and three brothers and the rest, she says, "disappears on make-up and clothes". She has long grown tired of the ageing Gian's rock 'n' roll repertoire and longs to perform to New Kids on the Block, her favourite American band.

"One day I'll save enough to buy a Panasonic CD player," she said as she deposited clouds of fresh powder on her cheeks and clambered into a stinky, pearl-encrusted nylon tube. Her dancing partner, Phuong Uyen, 21, has been entered by her mother for the

"Miss Lovely Legs" contest next spring, but is more interested in studying Japanese than in displaying her limbs to Vietnamese men. "I want to work for a Japanese company because rich customers tell me they are going to do very good business here," she said.

Miss Uyen has received wise counsel. Corporate Japan is making its way discreetly into the Vietnamese economy, setting up joint ventures and assembly plants to exploit what Japanese businessmen like to call the newest dragon in South-East Asia. If she studies her Japanese honorifics enough, Miss Uyen could soon rank among Vietnam's nouveau riche class herself.

Russians offer to put Pretoria in space race

FROM RAY KENNEDY IN JOHANNESBURG

RUSSIA is offering to put South Africa into space with intercontinental missile launchers made redundant by the Cold war's end. It was reported here yesterday.

One of South Africa's wilder dreams, at a time when the economy is in deep recession and it faces enormous challenges in repairing the ravages of apartheid, is to have its own satellite programme. According to the *Sunday Times* of Johannesburg, Russia would provide lift-off power at what is said in space terms to be a bargain price. For just over £5 million, one of its SS20 intercontinental missiles would be able to launch up to nine low-

orbit satellites. They would be sent up near Murrumbidgee or from a launching ramp taken to South Africa and shipped back afterwards.

South Africa wants to develop a commercially viable space programme, particularly for communications, weather and geological-survey satellites. Subsidiaries of Armscor, the state arms manufacturer, are heavily involved in research. The Russian offer was made after talks between Dr Rudolf Gruber, Bonn director of the South African Foundation, a research organisation sponsored by big business, and Professor Y. Solomonov, designer of the SS22 missile.

THE TIMES MONDAY DECEMBER 28 1992

Muslim doubts fail to halt UN plans for Sarajevo evacuation

BY TIM JUDAH
IN BELGRADE
AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

A UNITED Nations official said last night he was optimistic that 1,500 people could be evacuated from Sarajevo despite the Bosnian government's dismissal of the plan as "ethnic cleansing".

Mik Magnusson, the UN official, was due to discuss the plan, proposed by Lord Owen, the European Community peace negotiator, with Bosnian officials. It proposes that 500 people from each of the main groups — Serbs, Croats and Muslims — should be allowed to leave the besieged capital over the holidays as a good-will gesture.

However, the Muslim government of President Izetbegovic said that it smacked of "ethnic cleansing" and was unacceptable. The Bosnians said they were willing to discuss a different evacuation scheme.

Baroness Chalker, overseas development minister, called on the international community at the weekend to "bring the Serbs under control," saying that otherwise nowhere in the region would be safe.

She spoke on BBC Radio 4 of the dreadful condition of detainees she had seen during her recent visit to camps in Bosnia. "Some had been starved, some had been beaten, some had, I think, worse things done to them," she had heard too much about the reported rape of Muslim women to believe that the story could have been invented.

British ministers have been increasingly outspoken in condemning Serbian actions, but Britain has taken a cautious position on the use of force

■ Lord Owen's plan is in trouble, as is Slobodan Milosevic's attempt at a coalition

and the enforcement of a "no-fly" zone over Bosnia. The recent wounding of a British officer in a Serb mortar attack on a convoy will reinforce British worries that foreign intervention could increase the risk for foreign troops helping to deliver food and medicine in Bosnia.

The Labour party issued a warning yesterday of the dangers of enforcing the "no-fly" zone over Bosnia and emphasised that British troops



would be in the firing line in any retaliation. John Reid, the shadow armed forces minister, who has just returned from a visit to Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo and Bosnia, said there was evidence of the Serbs scaling down their aggression.

Last night, Depos, Serbia's leading opposition group, rebuffed soundings from President Milosevic's Socialist party about entering a coalition government.

According to Depos leaders, the Socialists, who emerged as the biggest party in elections last week, have been shocked

by the depth of support for extreme nationalists, who came second in the poll.

The Socialists fear that in coalition with the Serbian Radical party, regarded by the opposition as a neo-fascist movement, Serbia will be totally isolated, and that any chance of avoiding full-scale foreign military intervention and retaining Serbian gains in Bosnia and Croatia will be lost.

Opposition leaders reacted with anger and puzzlement to a congratulatory telegram sent by Milan Panic, the defeated presidential candidate, to President Milosevic. Both Mr Panic and Depos have accused Mr Milosevic of rigging the elections and called for them to be annulled.

On Saturday, Mr Milosevic appeared on television to tell Serbs that he was committed to working for peace, and crushing the crime wave engulfing Serbia. Armed gangs rob flats in central Belgrade and mysterious shots can be heard at night.

On the eve of the election, television equipment going to Serbia's independent station, Studio B, which said that it had received threats, was waylaid and stolen by highway robbers who had entered the country from Hungary. The UN sanctions committee had given special permission to Studio B to import the equipment so that it could compete with state-controlled television.

UK troops attacked, page 1

Hunt for water goes on in siege city

FROM JOEL BRAND
IN SARAJEVO

IN A city where most daily life has come to a halt after nine months of devastating siege, people have found a new way to pass their time. They spend all day patiently collecting water, a basic necessity that in the past month has become a commodity.

Water supplies to the city stopped on December 7, a few days after electricity was cut off. Shelling had damaged the power plant supplying energy to the city's main pumping station. The United Nations says it is trying to get the power plant and other utilities repaired, but it is fighting an uphill battle.

Since the beginning of this month the UN in Sarajevo has tried to work on damaged utility plants 52 times. Of those, all but six were cancelled before they started because of heavy fighting. Five times the repair teams came under direct shelling or shooting and were forced to abandon their missions. Only once was a team able to make a repair to one of the hundreds of damaged plants successfully.

"I am afraid the water may run out," Sabirja Smalbegovic, 65, said. "Not having electricity and water is the worst — worse than shelling. When there is shelling you go to the shelter, but if you have to go to get water they shoot at you." Mr Smalbegovic added as he paused to catch his breath along Sarajevo's main avenue, Marshal Tito Street.

The retired maintenance supervisor said, however, that he had been shot at several times while fetching water and he was no longer afraid.



High jump: an Armenian fighter leaping from one rock to another during an operation against Azerbaijani positions near the town of Lachin in the mainly Armenian disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan

Socialists resurrect Tapie for tough poll

FROM SEAN MAC CARTHAIGH
IN PARIS

PIERRE Bérégovoy, the French prime minister, has partly revealed his 1993 election strategy by quietly appointing Bernard Tapie, as minister for urban development. President Mitterrand signed the nomination on Saturday.

The flamboyant owner of the Marseilles football club resigned from the position in May after an opposition deputy accused him of a business swindle. Georges Tranchant, the neo-Gaullist politician who alleged M Tapie, 49, had conned him out of his share in a 13 million franc (£1.5 million) pay-off from a Japanese company, dropped his complaint last week after the two men came to an agreement.

With the French left trailing badly in the polls, and the combined right-wing parties confident of victory in March's general election, the Socialists face a stark choice. They can mount a damage-limitation exercise, trying to hold on to the party's core vote, and then lick their wounds in opposition, or they can try to form a loose alliance with the green parties and campaign aggressively against the right.

With M Tapie's appointment, M Bérégovoy seems to have plumped for the second option. The advantage of such a strategy, apart from the hope that a centre-left coalition might form a government, is that its momentum could form the base for the Socialist presidential campaign if M Mitterrand retires early.

M Tapie's campaigning style has always been aggressive and unapologetic. He is now sure to play a starring role in the election campaign.

Siberians complain of winter heatwave

FROM ROBERT SELBY
IN KLUCHY

WHILE Britain shivers in a cold snap, the infuriated Siberians are basking in a comparative heatwave and complaining that the winter is not "refreshing" enough.

Despite temperatures in western Siberia (the warm part) that have been hovering round -10C and were expected yesterday to plummet to -25C, the frozen wilderness stretching from the Ural mountains to the Pacific is experiencing a winter heatwave. "It was tremendous when I was young; we used to get yards of snow on the fields. Now the frost is weaker and the snow is thinner," said Pyotr Abramov, 62, an agricultural worker in Kluchy.

Meteorologists are uncertain why the change in temperature is happening, although they suspect it is caused by three things: the general warming of the planet; heavy industry in the Kuzbass and Novosibirsk regions of Siberia pouring out chemicals and pollutants; and the short-term effects of winds sweeping Siberia from the Atlantic.

The result has angered Siberians. "We had temperatures varying from -40C in the winter to 40C in the summer. Now anything below -15C is rare. The weather is not half as refreshing as it used to be," said Sergei Rundaiyev, a former KGB driver brought up in west Siberia.

Temperatures 20 years ago were on average 5C to 10C lower than they are now. The warming may result in the Russian steppe creeping northwards at the expense of the vast tracks of dense forest that sweep across the north of Siberia.

The change in the climate and the alleged poisoning of some of Siberia's 53,000 rivers has produced apathy and hostility aimed at political leaders. "Before the war the river was clean enough to drink from and the fish good enough to eat. Do that now and it might kill you," Mr Abramov said.

Bush faces demand to hand over his Iran-Contra notes

FROM JAMIE DETTMER IN WASHINGTON

LAWRENCE Walsh, the special Iran-Contra prosecutor, who continued yesterday to express indignation about the Christmas eve pardoning of Casper Weinberger, is planning to issue a subpoena to force President Bush to hand over all the private notes he made in 1986 about the illegal arms-for-hostages deal.

Sources in the special prosecutor's office confirmed that Mr Walsh may well question President Bush, probably after he has left office, about why he disclosed the existence of his typed Iran-Contra notes only 17 days ago. The special prosecutor is also likely to investigate the background to the White House's decision to grant pardons to Mr Weinberger, who was due to face trial on perjury charges in January, and five other Reagan aides.

In a newspaper interview yesterday, Mr Walsh alleged that by pardoning the former defence secretary, who had also withheld notes from the special prosecutor's office and from congressional enquiries, Mr Bush had "stopped the trial of a confederate". He said: "Whether criminal or not, it shows the ethics of the administration in a way that I could not have demonstrated." The chief prosecutor in

the Weinberger case, James Brosnahan, revealed late on Saturday that the former defence secretary's lawyers had said in a pre-trial meeting recently that they planned to call Mr Bush and former President Ronald Reagan as witnesses.

He claimed that Mr Bush's main motivation for granting the Christmas eve pardons was to "avoid a public appearance where he would be examined and cross-examined about the events of Iran-Contra". In granting the pardons, the president, who has always insisted that he was out of the Iran-Contra "power loop" in the Reagan administration, said that Mr Weinberger and the other five Reagan aides had acted out of "patriotism". He also said that the Walsh investigation represented the "criminalisation of policy differences".

In his initial reaction to the pardons, Mr Walsh disclosed that on December 11 his office had been told by White House lawyers of the existence of typed Bush notes concerning the Iran-Contra affair.

The special prosecutor and his staff were reviewing some notes which have been handed over when they were alerted to the president's decision to

grant the six pardons. During the six-year Iran-Contra investigation, Mr Walsh has been faced several times with former Reagan officials denying they have any notes and then eventually disclosing that they had in fact kept records of administration meetings dealing with the sale of arms to Tehran and supplies to Nicaraguan rebels.

In an interview yesterday with *The Washington Post*, Mr Walsh said he felt each official was "playing his own game" in holding back notes, but that the cumulative effect of their behaviour had been to protect Ronald Reagan from the threat of impeachment.

The dispute over the pardons is almost certain to engulf President-elect Clinton as well. *The New York Times* revealed yesterday that Les Aspin, the Democrat congressman who has been selected by Mr Clinton to be the new defence secretary, had promised to support the pardons when privately informed about them in advance by the White House.

■ Bush pension: President Bush's 21 years of government service mean he will collect \$187,000 (£118,000) in annual government pensions. (AFP)

Accolade for president-elect

BY JAMIE DETTMER

PRESIDENT-ELECT Clinton was named as *Time* magazine's Man of the Year yesterday, and in an interview accompanying the award he said global instability was one of his main concerns as he prepares to take over the White House.

The magazine, which started the award in 1927 when the American aviator Charles Lindbergh was given the accolade, noted that Mr Clinton will assume office at a "radically unstable moment in history". *Time* said it had chosen Mr Clinton in recognition of his election campaign, which he had "conducted with dignity, with earnest attention to issues and with an impressive display of self-possession under fire".

It said his campaign "served to rehabilitate and restore the legitimacy of American politics". With the ending of the Cold war, the Arkansas had become the "most powerful man in the world". *Time's* other reason for selecting Mr Clinton was more involved with what the president-elect could do than with what he had achieved so far, making the award an unusual one for the magazine. The election

Thomas McLarty
Warren Christopher
Les Aspin
Anthony Lake
Lloyd Bentsen
Leon Panetta
Robert Reich
Ron Brown
Mickey Kantor
Madeline Albright
Zoe Baird
Donna Shela
Henry Cisneros
Jesse Brown
Richard Riley
Federico Peña
Hazel O'Leary
Bruce Babbitt
Mike Espy
Carol Browner
Senior non-cabinet appointments include:
CIA director
James Woolsey
Robert Rubin

White House chief of staff
Secretary of State
defence secretary
National Security Adviser
treasury secretary
director of Office of Management and Budget
labour secretary
commerce secretary
US trade representative
US ambassador to United Nations
attorney-general
health secretary
housing and urban development secretary
veteran affairs secretary
education secretary
transportation secretary
energy secretary
interior secretary
agriculture secretary
administrator of Environmental Protection Agency
appointments include:
CIA director
James Woolsey
chairman of national economic council

victory had placed him in the position to "preside over one of the periodic reinventions of the country — those moments when Americans dig themselves out of their deepest problems". Several other presidents, including Franklin Roosevelt, Harry Truman, Ronald Reagan and George Bush, have won the award, as has Mikhail Gorbachev.

In his comments accepting the award, Mr Clinton said he was anxious about the state of the world. "We are seeing the flip side of the wonder of the

end of the Cold war. The bipolar world gave the US and the Soviet Union a limited capacity to contain some of what we're now seeing in Bosnia. I'm worried about Russia. It's all eminently predictable that there would be some setbacks."

He said that he hoped not to get bogged down in trying to fulfil the high expectations of American voters. On the personal front, he hoped White House life would not preclude his daughter, Chelsea, from leading a normal life.

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Confessions of an Oprah fan

Alice Thomson
meets the chat
show host who
plans to put an
end to British
reserve

Whether you are a wife-beater or a beaten wife, the killer of a father or the lover of a mother, you can tell it to Oprah Winfrey on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. Miss Winfrey bounces around her American audience probing into everyone's problems, alternately stern of gaze or unashamedly tearful and sympathetic. A male actor in pornographic films is asked, "Don't you get sore?" In one programme on infidelity a woman confessed: "I had three men as well as my husband and I can tell you it was great." Miss Winfrey told her she had a lot of stamina.

Her punchy performance makes her the highest paid female performer in the United States. She has the highest ratings in history, owns her own television and movie stu-



Chrystal gazing: if her show takes off, Ms Rose wants to have a studio of her own. "I'd also like to do a play on the West End. Then I'd like to write a book."

dio, and she has helped to draft child protection legislation for Congress.

But now Miss Winfrey has a competitor on this side of the Atlantic. Step forward Chrystal Rose. "Britain's answer to Oprah Winfrey", *The Chrystal Rose Show* starts on Carlton Television on January 6, one of a line-up intended to show that Carlton is a worthy successor to Thames Television.

"I know people are saying I am the next Oprah Winfrey but I am not trying to copy her personality or anything. All I am copying is the format of using a panel and an audience and a roving camera," Ms Rose says.

We are sitting in Carlton's squeaky-clean offices in St Martin's Lane, central London. Ms Rose is wearing a glamorous black and white check suit, lashings of pink and blue eye make-up and white nail varnish. And she is thin. She looks exactly what she used to be, an aspiring model and actress — and she is slightly nervous.

Ms Rose has been to America to find out what Miss Winfrey's secret is and has come back with a photograph

of the two of them laughing together. "Oprah is lovely. She is a mega-superstar but she gave us nearly half an hour, and said what to do and what not to do and talked all about her personal life. I would like to be as open as her," she says.

Unlike her mentor, Ms Rose is not a huggy, touchy person, nor does she have the uncanny grasp of populist psychobabble, motherly warmth and no-nonsense attitude which makes Miss Winfrey brilliant at her job. In a pilot for *The Chrystal Rose Show*, the host appears aloof and stilted.

Indeed Ms Rose seems too brittle to make a natural earth mother or sob sister. The show might be successful on its format alone but her talents may well lie elsewhere. She has qualities that Miss Winfrey lacks. She is more polished, less superficial, and her opinion of celebrities is more critical.

Why did she decide to do it? "I came in one day from netball in 1989 and Oprah was on TV. I saw this black woman and thought, this is fantastic — a multi-cultural show with a black woman. I thought, this is exactly what I

would like to do. I hired a crew for £50 and invited along people and asked them about tipping in Britain. Then I sent it to *Open Air* on the BBC."

The BBC asked her to interview Des O'Connor and her television career began. "I got bits and pieces which I combined with a modelling agency and a PR company but I was not doing what I wanted," she says. "So I begged my bank manager for £18,000 and planned a series of Oprah-type shows — on being single in London, domestic violence, boxing, divorce and infidelity." Her bank manager was not impressed but television companies were and she was commissioned by Carlton.

Chrystal Rose is an interpretation of her African name. Ms Rose was born in Lagos, Nigeria, and went to west London as a baby. Her mother returned to Nigeria when Ms Rose was a teenager and she has not seen her father since he went back in 1980. This Christmas they are all meeting at her house with her two sisters and brother.

Miss Winfrey has astounded viewers with confessions

that she was sexually abused by her cousin when she was nine (and several times thereafter by three other members of her family), was flogged by her grandmother and went to a juvenile detention centre at 13. She discusses her weight problems, adolescent promiscuity and her boy friend in unflinchingly honest detail.

Are Ms Rose's family worried that she will do the same? "They have nothing to worry about, they were great parents. But I don't think they have thought of the enormity of what will happen as a result of the show going on air."

Like Miss Winfrey, Ms Rose says that she believes in sharing her problems with the audience. "If I appear too successful, with none of the problems of the people I am trying to reach, there's no point. That is why I will be different from other chat show hosts, because I can relate to other people's problems and I will not appear patronising."

Ms Rose is a single mother with a 12-year-old daughter. She started as a model at 18 and has tried everything from

journalism to appearing in *EastEnders* and *Inspector Morse*. "It sounds as though I have done a great deal but I haven't. I've spent a lot of time on social security. I live alone with my daughter. There was one time when I was homeless for three weeks because of domestic violence and I was so poor I had to juggle between buying *The Stage* or some bread."

Ms Rose has not yet thought of any favourite causes but she feels very sympathetic towards single parents and wants them to see that you can succeed on your own. "I don't want to get on a political stand. Mine is a human relationships show about weight gain, plastic surgery and infidelity. We'll leave Maastricht and Somalia to *Panorama*."

The American programme attracts guests as diverse as Barbara Bush, Joan Collins, assorted crazies and kooks, the sad, the lonely and the triumphant. Unlike the Americans, the British are notoriously bad at confessing, especially to any sexual or emotional feelings. "In America everyone wants to be famous, so when they have a chance to be in front of the

camera they never stop," Ms Rose says.

"The British are great talkers when they believe passionately in their subject matter. I hope to make the British more open and frank. We must stop hiding our problems. It's why we are such a depressed nation."

"We did one pilot on battered wives. The man admitted that he beat his wife and, with the help of the audience and I, started questioning himself and realised he was a coward. I want my show to be the start of a new trend in British chat shows where people are willing to share experiences and don't see being poor and homeless as a negative thing."

Bigots, racists and sadomasochists will be among the few people not invited to share their experiences with Ms Rose and her audience.

Carlton says it is not interested in ratings. But if the show is very successful Ms Rose would like a studio of her own. "I came third in a Channel 4 screenplay writing competition. I'd like to do a play and produce it in the West End. Then I'd like to write a book."

A Dickens of a character

I raised a private glass, on Boxing day, to the memory of Monica Dickens. She was seventy and newly widowed when I met her, and — if I recall rightly — just off to a mountain adventure centre. There never was a trickier woman to interview because she constantly turned the tables. "You said, don't you? Where? These people who work the studio equipment — presumably they do night shifts?" Her empathy with teenagers made me — in my thirties — feel like a crusty dowager.



LIBBY PURVES

Ironically that she should die on Christmas day, a time of so many uneasy family gatherings dominated by elderly relatives of the opposite sex. One cannot imagine her falling prey to the syndrome described with such beautiful medical tact by Dr Thomas Stuttaford last week as hypoglycaemic "disinhibition" — in which one drink on an empty stomach leads to loud and dogmatic critical remarks ("Let me through — Auntie's gone into disinhibition — crisps, quick!").

But when I drank to Monica Dickens it was not primarily because of the way she was in old age. There are some books which, read in your teens, last all your life. They somehow reinforce your patterns of thought. Stella Gibbons' *Cold Comfort Farm* was one such, for me confirming forever a distaste for emotional scenes ("Do you want to break your mother's heart?" Yes, said Seth with elemental simplicity. The porridge boiled over.). Two more were Monica Dickens' *One Pair of Hands* — about her year working as a cook-general in various meanly genteel 1930s households — and *One Pair of Feet* — about her days as a wartime student nurse.

She did not take on either job to write about it, but she became in those works the unquestioned laureate of the dead-end female job. She did for domestic service and nursing what George Orwell more self-consciously did for being down and out. She spoke for the poor bloody infantry, female division.

Not that cooking or nursing are necessarily dead-end jobs. But they were for Miss Dickens, because she had no particular talent for either. In the hospital she was forever being hauled before Matron to be told "You will never make a nurse, Nurse" and in her 18 months' domestic service, although full of goodwill, she naturally belonged to the panicking, perspiring, oven-shelf-dropping, bleed-

ing-in-the-lobster-cucktails school of housekeeping.

What she expressed was the odd pleasure of grafting away cheerfully in the wrong job. She graphically rendered the exhaustion of servitude, and how it is when you can't think of getting out because your horizon is bounded by the next trip to the transport café for sausages and bacon after a night shift. Yet at the same time she confirmed that even the lowliest employee has a right to laugh at her employers whether pompous ward sisters or effete bachelor households. She had serious observations about nursing, about domestic servants and the angry unease of that 1930s generation which saw them slipping away forever, but she expressed it all lightly, as part of life's weird pattern.

Monica Dickens kept me going through those teen and student years when — lacking, like her, the keen drive to find career-building, network-forming jobs as some of my fellows did — I spent months behind bar counters, waitressing, minding dead-end libraries or copying out figures in a text record book.

Her spirit was with me through night shifts as a despised, scolded, novice tape-editor in the Bush House newsroom: I wished she could have chronicled some of the night editors there. Nervous of them as I was, trained by her merciless eye I found myself appreciative of such sights as a row of grey-cardiganed hulks sucking at paper mugs of soup in front of the women's gymnastics at Jam during the 1972 Olympics ("They must have such powerful thighs to be able to do that").

Monica Dickens' genius — never better than in those two books — was to express how it is to be tired, down-trodden and not particularly competent, and still to find life — observed from underneath — a riot. For that alone, drink to her.

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A Scottish ruling has once more aroused fears that the legal system is soft on sexual offenders

When a man posing as a Catholic priest brutally sexually assaulted a woman in Edinburgh she was not only the victim of a particularly vicious crime. She also became the victim, in the eyes of many, of a male-dominated legal system which seems to show excessive leniency towards men who commit violent crimes against women.

The case of Irene MacDonald (her name has been changed to protect her identity) has become a cause célèbre in Scotland. What has particularly shocked the public is that the initial life sentence on Mrs MacDonald's attacker was, three weeks ago, reduced on appeal to six years.

Mrs MacDonald, 37, is the chairman of her local Conservative association and the mother of four children. The attack happened in her home, one lunchtime last May, and was so meticulously planned that no one would have had their suspicions aroused. John Cronin, 21, had already passed himself off as "Father Sean Mulligan" and celebrated mass at St Mary's Cathedral in Broughton Street.

Weeks before the assault, he stopped two young Conservatives delivering leaflets for local elections and told them he wanted to donate money to the party. So when he telephoned Mrs MacDonald she did what most fund-raisers would do in the circumstances: she invited him for coffee.

At her large, detached house, Mrs MacDonald recounts the details of her ordeal in a matter-of-fact way. "I felt safe because he was a priest and he seemed knowledgeable about local party politics," she says. "He knew which wards we should be targeting, and which were Labour strongholds, and he wanted to open an account to pay for a newsletter. Even when he jumped on me, I was not so very frightened. He had told me he had been seeing Vatican officials and had been asked to investigate the case of Bishop Casey [who resigned earlier this year after admitting fathering a child]. So when Cronin tried to kiss me, my first thought was bloody hell, these Catholic priests are all the same. They all want sex."

"I pushed him off and ran as far as the door when he thumped me with his clenched fist across my face. He broke a

When the law fails a woman

number of teeth and I was screaming by this stage and realised I was in big trouble. He put his hands round my throat and I was crying 'I have got four babies, leave me alone'. He dragged me over to the fireplace and picked up a heavy brass poker and repeatedly hit me over the head with it. He hit me so hard the poker was bent at a right angle."

Cronin then forced her to perform a prolonged and degrading sex act before he left, taking money and a jacket to hide his blood-stained clothes.

Although she is a talented organiser, Mrs MacDonald has been advised by the psychiatrists to whom she was referred by her GP not to get involved in organising any campaign concerning her own case.

But her husband, father-in-law and friends are all lobbying on her behalf to get more female High Court judges (Scotland has only one temporary female judge at that level) and they are also pressing, as are groups in England, for judges to receive better training to deal with cases involving violence against women.

"I am absolutely devastated by the appeal court judgement," Mrs MacDonald says. "Since it was announced, I have been having nightmares about the attack whereas before, when I thought Cronin had received the proper punishment, I was beginning to cope. It almost makes you feel as if you have done something wrong. How can these three old men [the appeal judges] fully understand what a victim goes through? They heard 26 appeals



Danger man: John Cronin

in one day and completely went against what the original judge had said; that this man is a danger to the public."

The trial judge in Edinburgh, Lord McCuskey, took three weeks to come to his decision to pass a life sentence on Cronin, who pleaded guilty to a number of charges, the most serious of which were indecent assault and robbery. Cronin could not be charged with rape because vaginal penetration had not taken place. Lord McCuskey said that he was imposing the sentence because, however long Cronin served, when he came out, "life" meant he would always be under licence so the parole board would have some control over him. Giving judgment, Lord McCuskey said: "There is no other way in which a responsible decision can be taken because the conduct of the appellant over the years, culminating in the disgusting and dangerous attack on Mrs MacDonald, showed that Cronin posed a serious threat to public safety and this threat might endure indefinitely."

Now, after he has served his sentence, Cronin, who was reported to have smiled and waved to the public benches as he left the dock after the appeal court decision, will be free and there will be no subsequent check on his movements.

Mrs MacDonald's husband, father-in-law and Margaret McGregor, a Labour councillor, have all written to leading Scottish lawyers protesting about the reduced sentence. Yet according to the Right Hon David Hope, the

Lord Justice General for Scotland, the decision is final.

Mrs MacDonald says that she is disappointed with the lack of support that has been shown to her by the Conservative party. In contrast, the Labour-controlled council's women's unit is leading a campaign against violence against women and children, which was launched in the city earlier this month.

The aim of the campaign, according to Evelyn Gillen, one of the unit's officers, is to change attitudes and make violence against women more socially unacceptable. "We believe this is the first campaign of its kind in the UK," Ms Gillen says. "It is the result of a survey we did among young boys who said they expected to use violence at some time in a relationship. They also said violence is more acceptable when a man is married to the victim. These findings are shocking." The unit has devised a publicity and information campaign lasting six months.

"Responsibility for their own safety has always been placed on women, and they are advised not to stay out late or preferably not go out at all, and so on," Ms Gillen says. "We need to target men as part of a strategy to make people more aware that violence against women is a criminal offence. They have done this successfully in Canada, spending millions of dollars on television ads."

The spearhead of the Edinburgh campaign is a series of posters going up on 40 billboards throughout the city. A thousand more will be distributed in public houses. The first poster, concerning child abuse, has been on display over Christmas and will be replaced on January 11 with one illustrating domestic violence, then another depicting rape and sexual abuse will appear for four weeks and finally a poster combining all three subjects will be distributed.

The poster designs are being kept secret so as not to detract from their shock value. It is unlikely they will show photographs of any judges, although the campaign leaders — and Mrs MacDonald — hope that Scotland's legal authorities will get the message.

HEATHER KIRBY

Who will women be trying to look like next year? Fashion experts make their predictions

Face to face with '93

As we reach the end of 1992, looking back seems the done thing. It is a time to try to make some sense of things. Just why were Madonna's bosoms hot this year? What made the glamorous glut of super-models shave off their (previously) much-loved eyebrows, and who said it was okay to grow your hair and just wash it and go? Well, logically speaking, that's what we should be doing, but when it comes to the world of fashion there is little room for logic. This is a world where time has little meaning, and no one ever looks back — except for inspiration.

Having already dictated the fashions — the clothes, accessories, hairstyles and make-up which will be worn (or, at least, will inspire those worn) until the end of the summer of 1993, designers the world over are already thinking about what will follow for the winter of 1993/94. So instead of a painful post-mortem of 1992, influential image-makers have been rounded up and asked for their predictions for the new year. How will we look in 1993 and, more importantly, who will we look like? Until the 1950s fashion was



Fashion
IAIN R. WEBB

Himalayas to do shoots. Fashion copy will become very heavy and pretentious, with people seeking to find inner meaning in Next. The make-up will be all about soulful eyes — the mirrors of the soul. A 'no make-up make-up' look, with lots of washed-out saffron and pink. I love that look. I could do it right now. Hair will come off the women and be stuck onto men. The major model for next year is David Bowles. All that long blond hair."

● **NICHOLAS KNIGHTLY**, New, hot young designer whose first collection after graduating from Ravensbourne College of Art was snapped up by Harvey Nichols and sold out

"For me, Tizer Bailey is the face of 1993. She has a magical aura. Her natural beauty is strengthened by the actress in her; she is relaxed, calm and open. I'm tired of these cartoon-strip stereotypes that people call super-models — fashion is starting to react against these idealistic images, a reaction against the theatrical and unobtainable, a move towards the natural — a more honest approach. Time to relax. Tizer is perfect."

● **KARL LAGERFELD**, Designer for Chanel, Chloe, Fendi, and own label; photographer, illustrator

"A season is not shaped by one thing. The mix gives the mood. Kate Moss is certainly the new super-model. The other ones have to adapt, they are still stars but they have to move with fashion and times. They are still the best. But we are in the 1990s now. I think Kristen McMenamy is the new woman. In a different way from Kate Moss, but as strong. She is 'fashion' in a modern, more intellectual approach. She is the new 'versatile' face of fashion with no references to the past. Kate Moss fits easily with the post-hippyesque pattern. People think those days were the last easy, carefree times. For the first time people who had known a fashion world that mood back for themselves. Women of 40 are ready for 'grunge'. Dangerous... but that's fashion. Glamour in the mood of



Ahead of style: Sinead O'Connor

shaped by movie stars and debutantes. The 1950s had its stars of the screen, too, but for the first time models achieved star status in their own right — Fiona Campbell-Walter, Brownie Bugh and Barbara Goalen were the first super-models. This new celebrity catapulted the faces which emerged in the 1960s into the glossy columns, on the arms of the eligible bachelors of the pop generation. Young, image-conscious girls from every kind of background who no longer fitted a social stereotype — Jean Shrimpton, Twiggy, Pam Boyd, Veruschka, and Penelope Tree were envied, and copied by teenage girls the world over.

The trend continued into the 1970s, with a crop of girls who broke all the rules. Their faces no longer fitted an 'identikit' 'model' look. Lauren Hutton had a gappy smile, yet earned \$200,000 a year in America as the face of Charles Revson's Ultima beauty range; Marisa Berenson was a jet-setting heiress; Jerry Hall was a leggy sex footer from Texas; Marie Helvin, a Hawaiian beauty, stole the heart of the photographer David Bailey; Pat Cleveland was simply an actress on the catwalk.

Of course, nobody could have imagined the heights to which models would soar, but the 1980s gave us girls who appeared on the front pages of newspapers for doing nothing more than arriving at airports (something previously the province of film stars), and became quotable. "We don't get up for less than ten thousand dollars a day," being the most lavish of the bunch. The faces of Cindy Crawford, Christy Turlington, Naomi Campbell, Tatjana Patitz and, of course, Linda Evangelista, still grace the covers of magazines. They still walk miles on the international runways of the chicest designers. But, the shifting sands of style tell us that it's time for something new. The business that depends on change to survive needs new blood to keep it pumping, and a new look demands new faces.

● **MICHAEL ROBERTS**, Fashion photographer, painter, and contributor to numerous international fashion journals

"By next autumn everyone will want to look like Sinead O'Connor. They will all shave their hair off, for a very Buddhist look. Wigmakers will be able to pick up a lot of hair to make pieces with. It will be very mystical, lots of ethnic, and references to Eastern religions. This harks back to Julie Driscoll. Fashion editors will be trekking off to the



Sixties icon: Jean Shrimpton

the brassy 1980s, big shoulders and all that, is over. One can feel that we are now in the 1990s. The world, the mentalities and everything changed or is changing. It's a need.

"Photographers will also help a lot of the new faces come through. Steven Meisel is very good for that. As strong as Kate Moss and Kristen are, as flat and 'not fashion' is the nice face of Lucie de la Falaise. She is pushing, too. Strong, not classic beauties like Sofia Coppola have a chance. Personality is needed. Glamour has to be reinvented and, for that, new faces are needed."

● **KATHRYN FLETT**, Editor, Arena magazine

"No more grunge. Please! The Seventies look will shift, inevitably, from waifs and strays in hand-me-downs to full-blooded 1970s chic. Think Farrah, think le coup sauvage, think real sunbathers rather than nightclub pallor. Kate Moss — a Biba girl for the 1990s — will continue her rise but, as recession turns to depression, we'll need some good old-fashioned glamour to keep us going. Think those 1970s Virginia Slims ads, those Revlon/Charley girls... you've come a long way baby. Heels, hair,



Rising stars (above, left to right) Kate Moss, already a super-model, the versatile Kristen McMenamy and Cecilia Chancelor, not brand new, but individual

eyes, teeth. Who knows, maybe even the return of the smile? The girl? Sort of Jean Shrimpton meets Farrah via Catherine Deneuve. Her name? Who knows, but she's out there, somewhere..."

● **ANNA COCKBURN**, Fashion editor, Elle magazine

"The changing look of models next year will occur because there has been a long-overdue shift of emphasis in fashion photography, the best of which in 1993 will be a product of the photographers who can enhance the beauty of models without masking their individual style and personality. It is the perspective of the photographers and fashion editors which is changing, rather than the models themselves. Prominent faces next year will be Cecilia Chancelor, Emma Balfour, Amber Valetta, Rosemary Ferguson, none of whom are brand new to modelling, but will be in demand in 1993 because each possesses 'beauty', strengthened by their own distinct individuality."

● **ALEXANDRA SHULMAN**, Editor, Vogue magazine

"1993 will see the end of the hairbrushed amazon as queen of the catwalk, although no doubt she will remain an ideal on the streets for some time to come. Cecilia Chancelor, Kate Moss, Courtney Wright, Amber Valetta and Lucie de la Falaise embody the style of fashion at the moment for their pale simplicity and freshness which doesn't appear brash in these hard times. Many of the established models carry the new spirit perfectly — like Christy Turlington and Claudia Mason. However, my guess is that waifishness is a transitional phase in the move towards the recognition of increasingly individual styles of beauty. Illustrated, for instance, by the current success of Kristen McMenamy. So long as we want super-models, there they will be. Jean Shrimpton was a super-model, in fact a remarkably similar one to the new breed."

● **MARY GREENWELL**, Make-up artist whose work appears on the pages of Vogue and fashion journals worldwide and is seen on the catwalks of international designers

"There is no one role-model in particular, there is room for everyone. Kate Moss's fresh face is a good example of things to come. Aesthetics change with each decade and the way in which hair and make-up artists interpret the new look is always open to change. The atmosphere of change is similar to the feeling in 1982/83 when the Japanese (Yohji, Comme des Garçons) hit the catwalks. The same feeling of individuality and quirkiness is upon us again. The reference points are cleanliness and airiness, hippy values. The super-models will adapt because they are so professional and so beautiful. They are celebrities in their own

right and are a highly individual band of women, always capable of change. They have been a wonderful inspiration to everyone over the past four or five years, and will continue to be so. The current recession is forcing people to re-address their values, the new feelings are those of reality and earthiness. Rifat Ozbek predicted this change as long ago as 1986. With his white, New Age collection he heralded the shift toward peace, tranquility and nirvana. Karl Lagerfeld, the man who originally gave women the ultimate status symbol — the quilted (and gilded) handbag — has now thrown glamour out of the window and given women back the freedom and confidence they lost during the power-crazy years of the late 1980s. Women are being born again, femininity is a stronger more positive celebration of being a woman; a brilliant, magical time."

● **SARAH DOUKAS**, Owner of Storm model agency, and the woman responsible for discovering Kate Moss

"The nouveau hippy look that was achieved in a lot of the pictures of Kate Moss in 1992 reflects, perhaps, a more human and



Seventies chic: Farrah Fawcett

sensitive approach to fashion. However, there is far more substance to both the look of the 1990s and Kate Moss than just a teenage hippy-type image. For instance, Kate has just appeared on the US Harper's Bazaar cover, where we find our laid-back teenage girl transformed into a woman of dignity and elegance. Essentially, she is an image of style and refinement but still with more sensitivity than the harsh, brash look of the 1980s. So perhaps the key for the look for 1993 will be this versatility and the ability to change from casual to sophisticated. Expect to see a lot more of Kate in 1993."

● **GIANNI VERSACE**, Designer, Milan

"There is obviously a radical change in women's fashion. Silhouettes, colours, shapes have suddenly changed and it seems there is no time to adjust the existing style.

A new simplicity and a trend towards few decorations find their roots in today's life, in the rush and modern life we all live. Since it is a new phase the new look is represented by new faces, by models who are different from the top models we usually see in fashion shows. The new face is a dreaming, not an aggressive one. I think the top models like Christy Turlington, Naomi Campbell or Claudia Schiffer will survive and, of course, will have success for a long time — but they won't be alone."

● **TINA GAUDIN**, Health and beauty editor, Harper's Bazaar magazine, New York

"1993 will be the year of the gawky not the glamorous. And it is not going to be just about one face — there's a multitude of new, young girls skyrocketing through the ingenu modelling ranks who we will be seeing more of in the next year. While Kate Moss was definitely the catalyst for the new wave of smaller, paler-skinned, finer-boned, gamine models, she is by no means on her own."

"Others to watch out for include Emma Balfour, Laura Roundell, Janine, Simone, Patricia Harman, Jenny Brunt, Kate Dillon, Amber Valetta and Lyndsey Parker. What's also going to be interesting and unusual in 1993 is watching 'the come-backs' — girls who we'll all have seen before but, because their face and body fit the new look, will undergo a revival. Cecilia Chancelor and Lucie de la Falaise are excellent examples, as is Kristen McMenamy. These new girls will positively redefine what we think of as beautiful. For most of them their success is in projecting their personalities as well as their faces."

"In 1993 it's going to be okay to be shorter than 6ft, to have breasts that measure in at less than a 36C, and it's also going to be chic to have unsymmetrical features and to be described as 'interesting' rather than 'flawlessly beautiful'. With these girls, make-up also takes a new direction. The way they photograph best is with 'no make-up' make-up, that doesn't mean they're not wearing any, it just means that a make-up artist has toiled for hours to make them look as if they aren't. Hair will also take the direction of simplicity and softness. Expect wash and wear cuts, fringing, wisping and lots of centre partings. It's the accessibility of the faces of 1993 that will make them so endearing. Women are going to be able to identify far more readily with this new batch of girls, who will be far less alienating than the super-models of the past six years. Even more positive is that, so far, none of them show any signs of interest in ascending to the heights of heady, super-model status. We are about to enter an age when modelling will once more be looked on as just another job."

● **SAM MCKNIGHT**, Hairdresser, who has shaped the look of hair,



Pale simplicity, powerful personality: Amber Valetta (left) and Lucie de la Falaise



Magical aura: Tizer Bailey



working on almost every super-model for every magazine and designer world-wide

"The five girls that stick out in my mind are Lucie de la Falaise, Kate Moss, Cecilia Chancelor, Amber Valetta, and Shalom. For all different reasons. Cindy, Christy, Tatjana, were all different, they made it because they each had a personal style and look. There will never be anyone to replace them, but of course faces will evolve making a few flurries, but there will never be anything like that again, it was a unique thing. Whatever happens the look will become a lot more individual. Kate will be Kate, etc., etc. It doesn't matter if Kate and Lucie are tiny. It's the same with hair. If a girl on a job has a certain look, you have to adapt that and make something of it, you can't just stamp a new look on her. It's the same for designers. Designers are again making clothes which Cecilia wore in 1983. I hate that word grunge, they are clothes we've been wearing for years. Whatever designers do, everyone still wears jeans, or leathers, all those classic things. It's weird to wear designer things now, it's almost vulgar to be done up in all those labels. But it's a

cycle, remember we hadn't seen glamour for years, so this is just another backlash."

● **MARIE HELVIN**, One of the faces of the 1970s, now designing her own range of stretch fashions

"People are talking about the 1970s revival, but it's really the late 1960s which are being reworked. I came into modelling at the end of that period. I remember my first job with the photographer Barry Lategan. The make-up artist was sick and he said to me and the three other girls, 'I want you to look like flowers'. I thought, 'What?', but the other girls understood and did my face — all yellow, purple and green eye make-up. That was the time of Giorgio Sant'Angelo, vibrant colours, wild make-up — Penelope Tree, and Marisa Berenson. The designer fashion in the 1970s wasn't really fun or funky, it was straight and boring, which is why photographers like Bailey made up little stories, because the clothes were so dull. Personally I hate nostalgia, it plays safe, it doesn't make for change, but the fashion business always looks back at times of depression. When we come out of it, it will be great."

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Matthew Parris

The eighth wonder of the world is 12,000 feet up in the Bolivian Andes

It is snowing in Britain? It is here. This is my first Christmas eve spent at an abandoned sulphur mine 17,000ft high in a remote corner of southern Bolivia. We are looking for a piece of scrap steel which might hang the offside front springs of a clapped-out Land Rover back onto the chassis from which they came adrift when we hit a lump of lava on the track.

But I don't care. I am not in the least worried. I only feel exhilarated, for I have just discovered my eighth wonder of the world. In an era where there seems so little left to explore I never thought to reach middle age without knowing about this. Like stout Cortés, only slimmer, I have gazed upon a hidden world.

You know of the pyramids, you have read about the hanging gardens of Babylon, you have visited the Parthenon and the Niagara Falls. But have you heard of the Salar de Uyuni? Few have. Still fewer have come here. I should never have done so myself if I had not read Henry Shukman's account in his book *Sons of the Moon*. Shukman sounded wonder-struck, as he was only 18 when he wrote and (I thought) perhaps prone to adolescent exaggeration. I decided to see the Salar for myself. Now I have done so, Shukman understates.

The question why this marvel in the Bolivian Andes is not better known is answered, no doubt, by the inconvenience of getting here. I must write about BR — Bolivian Railways — in detail and limit myself, now, to one short message of comfort for Essex commuters who venture into Fenchurch Street: it could be worse. It could be much, much worse. Infinitely worse. Getting to Uyuni, from Antofagasta in Chile, was hell, but we did it.

Uyuni is a town at the edge of my eighth wonder. The hotel is fine. Its bed bugs do not bother you and flushing the loo with a bucket from an oldrum of water is your preferred toilet routine. Uyuni is a dump: a windy, friendly, colourful dump: a big Indian market, really, fanning out through dusty streets lined with tin-roofed shacks. The altitude is about 12,000ft.

The town lies by the Salar. The Salar de Uyuni is a 3,000-square-mile salt pan: 10 billion tons of salt ringed by volcanoes, snow-capped and smoking; and surrounded by turquoise lagoons fed by hot and cold underground springs, tens of thousands of flamingoes, and wildlife of the rarest sort. The whole strange, secret world is suspended high above the great plain of the Chilean Atacama which stretches beneath us to the Pacific shore.

The Salar, and the magnificent waste of lakes and mountains which guard it, is in fact a desert. The deserts of South America are quite full and very intense, far more beautiful than those of Africa, Arabia or Australia. They are full of incident: bright, sharp colours, yellows, reds and browns, children's picture-book volcanoes soaring into clear blue skies, silhouetted mountainscapes and ice peaks, cactuses and weird rocks scattered about, geysers spouting, hot springs steaming, sulphur tipping from the mountainside, lava-flows which seem to have hardened only yesterday. If a pterodactyl were to swoop round the nearest smoking cone, it would hardly seem out of place.

And there are beautiful lagoons, of which the Salara de Uyuni was once one. It is about 60 miles across. Scattered around it are smaller salars, all of them once part of a great inland sea. Now only the salt remains.

This you will not believe until you see it. It is a vast unbroken crust, blinding white, the size of two English counties, pancake-flat, pure salt crystal. It stretches like the top of a gigantic Christmas cake as far as the eye can see. Punched through it, you glimpse the shallow saline lake beneath, rising and falling with the seasons, the only water sometimes a few inches above the crust, usually (as now) hidden beneath the hard, baked surface.

On this you can drive, if you take care. We drove for half an hour at 60mph into the middle. From here you can see nothing but salt stretching to the horizon, where hang the low black silhouettes of encircling hills. These hills seem to float, if you can imagine it, in a distant narrow band around you, suspended between an upper hemisphere of blue-white and a lower hemisphere of sheer white. Someone has compared it to the perspective of an ant crawling across an infinite mirror. It is entirely Daliesque.

The salt crumbles underfoot if you move. Otherwise there is absolutely no sound, absolutely no life, only the singing in your head which grows strangely loud. In the middle of the salar is an "island". It is literally an island, for its rocky shores rise, almost black by contrast, straight out of the salt. Nothing lives there but rock-rabbits and cactuses — thousands of spiky 20ft green poles, the gift of a man, sprouting Bowers. The scene is dreamlike, surreal.

From the salar we drove towards the Chilean border past the active Ollague volcano and five lagoons, their paintbox colours orchestrated by their resident algae. Flamingoes were everywhere and in the valleys vicuña (an endangered species, deer-like prototypes for the domesticated llama) ran. By the shores of the huge Laguna Colorado, its waters salmon-pink, we slept on the floors of the mud huts of the tiny Indian settlement. Our mattresses were Chilean fishmeal sacks, stuffed with straw.

Limping now, our vehicle's front axle crabbed to the chassis, we made for a sulphur mine called Susana, passing two cold and lonely Bolivian soldiers at a half-ruined camp. Bright yellow lumps of sulphur dropped by the lorries which truck minerals to the Chilean border lay all around.

And it began to snow. Which is where you came in, I suppose, to this account sketched out while the hunt for a steel rod continued. If you are reading this then presumably we did manage to effect the repair and did survive the return journey over that snow-laden ridge ahead with our Indian driver, who is mad, drunk and dribbling green purée of coca leaf, a habit to which some of us have succumbed.

This will sound rather breathless, I suppose: a bit like an unpaid advertisement for the Bolivian tourist board. But I am breathless: breathless with the altitude, and breathless with the beauty.

The House of Commons is not the nest of villainy many like to pretend, writes Peter Riddell

In praise of politicians

RIDDELL ON MONDAY

means of dismissal; just ask Chris Patten, Francis Maude, John Major and half a dozen others who lost both their seats in the Commons and their ministerial offices last April, while they watched their friends stay in office. But the suddenness of defeat underlines that MPs are ultimately at the disposal of the electorate.

But we should not be too dismissive of MPs. Their vices are less venal and more public than those of many other groups. The pure artist or writer bemoans the impure politician is often a humbug, eagerly after the next cheque and feuding with his or her fellow artists and writers. The difference is that MPs' faults come under the public spotlight.

The motives of politicians are as mixed as the rest of us. They are not the selfless servants of

the people they may pretend, but nor are they just out for themselves. As good a definition as any was Richard Crossman's in 1958: "A tradition of public service; then a dash of vanity and another of self-importance and, added to these, a streak of rebelliousness, a pleasure in good talk for its own sake, and in gregarious living. These, much more than the desire for personal power, are the qualities of the individual member."

Money itself plays little part. Most current MPs of whatever party, let alone ministers, earn less than they would outside the Commons. The real vice of politicians is vanity. They take themselves too seriously. But that is a harmless enough sin, easily corrected by the way that most MPs are ignored.

Even to talk of politicians generally is a mistake. The days may be long past when Harold Macmillan could claim that many Tory MPs, perhaps the majority, had no desire at all for political advancement and few sought office. And the roman-

tics may deplore the disappearance of the independent member (always much exaggerated) and the rise of the full-time career politician, the former special adviser or councillor eagerly seeking from the time of election a post on one or other of the front benches.

The Commons remains, however, far from homogeneous. Behind the grey suits, there is still diversity. For every Michael Portillo or Gordon Brown rising rapidly to the top, there is a Tam Dalyell, Frank Field, Robert Adley or Nicholas Budgen prepared to challenge received opinions. Wide differences in regional interests, and accents, continue. The Commons has its fair share of charlatans, crooks, phonies (generally found out very quickly), and bores (above the national average). But even the most pompous MP often has something interesting to say about some subject.

Ambition obviously plays a part in at least the early stages of most politicians' careers. Fame is still the spur. The glittering

prizes still beckon. But in my experience most MPs have views. Their initial interest in politics was triggered, if not by an ideological commitment, then at least by a sense that they wanted to change the world.

Most MPs are genuinely attached to their constituencies, often in an absurdly proprietorial way, and enjoying helping sort out local problems. That may account for the intriguing finding in the Mori poll that, while there is a net balance of minus 24 points (satisfied less dissatisfied) in attitudes to MPs generally, the net rating is plus 16 when it comes to how voters see their own MPs.

Our MPs are not saints. But that is not why we elected them. In their often muddled way they reflect our varied interests and aspirations. Shortly after entering the then 635-strong Commons in 1959, Richard Marsh told Clement Attlee how fascinating he found it meeting the people there. He meant he was mixing with household names. Attlee saw it differently. Puffing his pipe and nodding his head, the former prime minister said: "Quite right, my boy. Very profound remark 635 of them, all peculiar one way or another."

Bernard Levin welcomes the proposals that will withdraw a legal licence to print money

I don't know why everybody looked at me when Lord Mackay announced that there was to be a reconstruction of the libel laws; true, I have worn out a couple of dozen newspaper legal advisers, and indeed whitened the hair of a good few editors, but m'lud (yes, I know they don't say m'lud any more, and indeed I know who was the last lawyer to use that charming abbreviation — it was the late Sir Valentine Holmes) has not had the pleasure of my company in the witness box for 23 years. (There was a moment, a few weeks ago, when it seemed that I might be appearing not in the witness box but in the dock — a little matter of contempt of court — but it blew over, *absit omen*.)

The present libel law, or more exactly the use of it, has become a monstrous scandal, for several reasons. First, hardly a week passes without some con man demanding gigantic sums from a newspaper editor because the organ has ruined his business, his friendships and his character, none of which exists. The editors cough up sums rarely less than five figures and more often six, in the knowledge that if the con man went to court, he would be awarded even more (plus costs) from presumably demented juries.

I do not believe that more than a tenth of the libel plaintiffs the courts deal with have any justification whatever, and most of the tenth could and should have been settled over a cup of tea with a mild apology and a shakehand. Moreover, the British libel laws (and usages) are so grotesquely perverted that thimble-riggers from all over the world have been finding or inventing a connection, however obviously fraudulent, with a case in Britain, in the hope — a hope very rarely dashed — of dancing out of the court with a fortune, plus costs.

The second charge concerns the very strange origin of the helplessness that binds newspaper editors to pay almost any amount of money to keep a libel action out of court: I believe that

I have discovered the nature of the strangeness. Almost all libel cases are tried with juries; juries are a cross-section of the populace; many of them read the — er — less expensive newspapers, and feel guilty about their addiction to the scandal sheets; the guilt must be expiated, so it is assuaged by the huge sums juries award; QED. Very touching, but not justice.

Third, the reason for a libel law has been forgotten. It is, or should be, a means by which the harm done by the libel (if any, and there usually isn't) is put right. That could be done by public apology, by substantial notices in the local or national press, by a form of words on which the plaintiff could rely to demonstrate his uprightness, and more such proceedings. But the bar to an equitable libel law in this country is the damnable rule that *damages is assumed*. From the moment the case starts, the principles of justice are inverted: the plaintiff can fold his arms and demand that the defendant prove everything, and until that imbalance is restored we shall never have a libel law that is remotely fair.

Fourth, it gives so much money to the lawyers (costs can go, and have gone, into the million-pound stratosphere) that they are often very close to bribery — the fomenting of litigation. (I am not sure if bribery, or an equivalent, can be committed by solicitors; if it can be, my word it is.)

But fifth, and most of all, even when the plaintiff is honest in his claims, the entire court proceedings are corrupted by the blatant falsity of the statements the jury is asked to believe — far more and far worse than in any other branch of legal dispute — together with the money that oozes out of every crack in the courtroom.

So what is to be done? Well, Lochinvar Mackay has drawn up a schedule of changes that, given a chance, would cure almost every one of the justified complaints in our present



system: as I read through what is proposed I became almost alarmed at the radicalism with which the task has been undertaken.

To start with, there is a proposal which would wipe out in one clause something like 90 per cent of libel actions before they got into court: the judges (and you know how I love judges) would rule, before the trial machinery even started, whether the words complained of "are capable of bearing the defamatory meaning alleged".

Next, and nearly as good, a libel defendant would avoid the entire courtroom proceedings, together with the years of preparation, if willing to make "an offer of amends", which would take the form of an agreement that the defendant is in the wrong and is willing to

pay a sum in damages fixed by a judge.

Then again, another grievance will be ended: it was one of Robert Maxwell's most used weapons. He would take an action for libel, but not go forward with it, thus stifling not only the defendant but any further investigation in the tender area. Then the law allowed him to mock justice for three years, before the case had to be prosecuted or dropped: in the new version, it is put up or shut up in a year.

But the jolliest item of all would sort out the men from the boys in no uncertain fashion. Hitherto — it was one more of the scandalous inversions of justice that went with the defendant's duty to prove everything while the plaintiff needed to prove nothing — however dis-

reputable or indeed crooked the plaintiff, the defendant could not use knowledge of the opponent's specific malfeasances, but could only plead that the plaintiff had a general bad character, which was thus almost impossible to prove. Now, it seems, a defendant will at least be able to mitigate damages if the defence can call on evidence of wrongdoing in the area of the case.

Will it happen? Time will have to be found in the parliamentary calendar, but for so massive a re-ordering of our libel laws it would certainly be provided. There may be a rearguard action by the Bar, and the strength of that should not be underrated; although the judges made monumental fools

of themselves when Lord Mackay's first green papers were published (though that was nothing compared to the fool of himself that the then chairman of the Bar made), they have plainly won: how many solicitors have you seen pleading in the High Court?

It has been said that Lord Mackay wants to leave the Woolstack. I hope that it is not true, and if it is that he will reconsider his decision. Half a century has gone by without any significant reshaping of our libel laws, and half of that half century has been exploited by some of the worst rogues who ever walked into a courtroom poor and walked out very rich indeed. If Lord Mackay does retire, I for one shall fire off a 21-gun salute, and then go and libel somebody, just for fun.

Let stalk Strine

A LITTLE-KNOWN fact about the late Monica Dickens was her contribution to Australian sub-culture — she was responsible for the language known as Strine. Back in the Sixties, while Dickens was in a Sydney bookshop autographing copies of her latest book, a woman handed her a copy and said: "Emma Chisir". Assuming this to be her name, Dickens dutifully wrote "To Emma Chisir" on the flyleaf. This did little to satisfy the purchaser who had, of course, been asking "How much is it?"

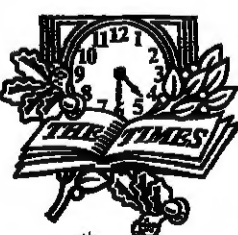
The incident was later reported in a Sydney newspaper and a new Antipodean language was born. It became particularly popular through the efforts of Afterbeck Lauder, a linguistic luminary who made himself professor of Strine studies at Sinny University. Lauder, whose real name has never been known, invented the word Strine — from Australian — and coined such unforgettable phrases as *gloria soame* (gloria's home), *marmon dead* (Mum and Dad), and, of course, *orpheus rocker* — which needs no translation.

With a touch of eccentricity that will certainly appeal to the French, Sir Christopher Mallaby intends to travel through the Channel tunnel on his way to take up office as Her Majesty's latest man in Paris. Mallaby, who replaces Sir Ewen Ferguson in February, is making a point of donning hard hat and riding in one of the temporary railcars under the channel — thus becoming the first British ambassador ever to take up any post over land. While the Foreign Office is unable to confirm travel plans, insiders at the Paris embassy say Mallaby is keen to use the tunnel — doubtless as a further sign of rapprochement between the nations.

Using their heads

THE Carlton Club, bastion of the Tory establishment, is relying on its most illustrious members — past and present — to help pay for the extensive restoration required after the building was damaged by an IRA bomb in 1990. The club has commissioned a limited edition of prints from its portrait collection of post-war leaders. They are being discreetly advertised at competitive prices within the Conservative party.

The order book for the prints,



DIARY

which range in price from £1,750 to £3,000, makes interesting reading — not least as a barometer of the relative popularity of the post-war leadership. Baroness Thatcher, the only female member of the club, heads the list, with John Major and Winston Churchill running close behind. Sir Edward Heath is left trailing in their wake, whereas Lord Home — whose tenure was not of the longest — remains surprisingly popular.

The present prime minister must indeed be flattered. The orders made for prints of Major have been lodged in anticipation, rather than appreciation, of his portrait. "The official portrait of John Major has not been done yet because of his punishing schedule," says Martin Cowen, who is responsible for the project. "In spite of this, the orders are still coming in. All proceeds will be used for the

continued refurbishment and renovation necessary because of the terrorist attack on the club." A stock of 850 pictures has been printed of the last three prime ministers — those complete with signed letters command the highest prices. The four surviving Tory prime ministers, all of whom have enthusiastically supported the scheme, will be presented with their own prints — gratis.

Shrinking Major

THE natural caution of John Major did not prevent him from flying out to Bosnia, but the prime minister is nevertheless showing considerable angst over the fate of his 36,200 majority in Huntingdon, likely to be reduced by as much as half if the Boundary Commission has its way.

So worried is Major by the proposals that he has called in

Robert Hayward, the Tory party's pet psephologist, for personal advice. Hayward saw the prime minister twice in one day before Christmas, and calculated that Major, who enjoys the largest numerical majority of any British prime minister, is likely to see the number dwindle to 20,000. "With that sort of majority he hasn't got too much to concern him," says Hayward, who should know. He lost his Kingswood seat, where he had a 4,393 majority, at the last election.

Even the most devoted opera lovers may occasionally balk at the £3.60 cost of a round of smoked salmon sandwiches at Covent Garden's crush bar. They may turn their noses up even more if they know they may be eating recycled offerings. Long gone are the days when unsold sandwiches were offered to the staff restaurant. They are offered for sale again the next day, according to UpROH!, the in-house magazine.

Return of fire

A BAN on Christmas log fires in Rotherham has done little to dent the spirit of Lord Scarbrough, whose sprawling 18th-century home, Sandbeck Park, is hard to heat at the best

of times. In an act of aristocratic defiance, Scarbrough has sent a Christmas card to all 63 members of the local council depicting him in a coronet and robes trying to warm his cockles by a log fire. Drawn by his friend



Willy Rushton, the card offers "warm wishes for Christmas and the New Year".

The council has imposed the ban under a new smoke-control order which, thankfully, does not prevent the use of central heating. "At least I can use that," says Scarbrough. "I won't break the law but the rooms here are so big that open fires help keep the place warm. It does seem ridiculous that I can't burn wood in my home but I can in the garden."



JAILHOUSE ROCKED

Britain's prisons need the disciplines of the market

The Ballad of Reading Gaol was played once again over the weekend and its refrain remains as bleak as ever. As the buildings of this remand centre blazed, inmates rioted and injured prison officers were rushed to hospital. Derek Lewis, the prison service's new director general, must have wondered whether his appointment last week was much of a Christmas present.

The choice of Mr Lewis, the former chief executive of a television company, who admitted he had never visited a jail, has been widely criticised. But the appointment of an experienced businessman untarnished by the sluggish culture of the penal system may prove to be an inspired one.

Spending on Britain's 128 prisons rose by 13 per cent in 1990-1. The Woolf report which followed the Strangeways riots of two years ago has set a fresh agenda for humane reform. Yet the problems of overcrowding, inhumane conditions, drug abuse and prisoner suicide seem as insoluble as ever. The prison service is in no position to scorn the counsel of a distinguished outsider.

Official fingers usually get burnt when they set about penal reform. How a society punishes its lawbreakers is a mark of its ethical character, humanitarianism and commitment to the rule of law. Any change, therefore, is bound to offend one moral position or another — as Kenneth Clarke, the home secretary, will discover if he chooses to introduce custodial sentences for young teenagers.

But the resistance to change in the prison system also reflects the power of the vested interests that run it. No public sector union has managed to insulate itself from reform quite so successfully, and for so long, as the Prison Officers' Association. Anomalously, its 29,500 members have retained the right to strike, while the union's stranglehold on staffing levels and rosters has made a

mockery of modernisation plans. Last year, each prison officer took an average of five weeks' sick leave. The Fresh Start programme to reduce overtime costs is now in place and will encourage a loosening of these restrictive practices. But the reform of the prison service must rest on two more foundations: the development of a mixed economy and radical decentralisation.

The privatisation of prisons has become a fiercely emotive issue, provoking the charge that businessmen will be profiting from suffering. Yet what Mr Clarke proposes is not a straightforward sell-off but an ordered procedure for contracting out services previously provided by a grossly inefficient monopoly. Agreements between state and contractors will be hedged about with conditions and the threat of stiff financial penalties. Privately-run prisons will be supervised by a government servant and monitored by Judge Tumin's inspectorate. The market should complement, rather than undermine, the state.

The record of the American prison system shows that privatisation is not a panacea and there have already been instances of violence and abuse at the Wolds Centre in Humberside, the first private prison in this country. There is no guarantee that the private sector will be able to raise the resources to bid for prison contracts. But the aim of the reform should not be uniform privatisation but a healthy mixed economy in which private and public sector both play a part and competition edges out stagnation.

Above all, this should be accompanied by decentralisation. The establishment of the new prison services agency in April under Mr Lewis is a step towards devolution; but it is absurd that prison governors are still unable to recruit, promote or hire staff. Every school in the country now runs its own budget. Why not prisons?

VIEW HALLOO!

Stop harassing huntsmen for their old tradition of a good time

Today two tribes of traditional British sportsmen will be out in force for one of the first mass meetings of their season. From the South Devon to the Duke of Buccleuch's, and from the Essex and Suffolk to the Llandello Farmers', the countryside of Great Britain will once again come alive with the sweet music of the hounds, the bay of the hunting set, and the hullabaloo of the hunt saboteurs being dragged away by police or beaten up by hunt followers. The huntsmen chase the fox, and the anti-chase the hunters: the sabs in pursuit of the nobles, and the demonstrators harassing the equitators.

Both sides in their opposed sports stand at the head of very long traditions. The custom of taking hounds on military campaign and writing about their care goes back beyond the Duke of Wellington to the dim past of Arrian, the biographer of Alexander the Great, and Xenophon. Hunting for pleasure is a primeval human instinct, started by the ancient Briton bringing home the bacon by bluffing a beehive, and extending down to the young bloods who galloped a straight line at Balaclava or drove one in the Gulf war. From that inveterate poacher, Falstaff, to Surtees, Kipling, Siegfried Sassoon and Evelyn Waugh, literature is full of hunting. In their devotion to it from William the Conqueror, who enclosed the New Forest for his sport, onwards, hunting has been a defining pastime of the monarchy.

On the other hand, opposition to hunting is not just a new pursuit of the envious or griggish urban and suburban masses. It represents an old English Puritan tradition of single-issue fanaticism and bossing other people about how to behave. Sam Johnson said that it was very strange, and very

melancholy, that the paucity of human pleasures should persuade anyone to call hunting one of them. And William Cowper exclaimed: "Detested sport. That owes its pleasures to another's pain." As Margot Asquith interrupted, when someone was praising her *bête noire* Lord Lonsdale's prowess as a rider to hounds: "Jump? Anybody can jump. Look at fleas."

More people are hunting and following hounds than ever before. The gulf between the country hunting tribe and the suburban protesting tribe is vast, and growing wider. Both sides really need to cultivate that other old English virtue of tolerance.

Earlier this year a video nasty, taken by a mole from the League Against Cruel Sports, showed cuddly little foxes being dug out and thrown to the hounds by the celebrated Quorn Hunt, and so (rightly) disgusted tender opinion. Kevin McNamara's wild mammals (protection) bill was defeated by only 12 votes earlier this year, with 27 Conservatives supporting it. Campaigns to ban hunting on National Trust land and around the county councils will not go away.

The saddle-leather conservatives of hunting must bend to the modern winds, and codify their sport so as to minimise cruelty. The protestors ought to accept that there is far more cruelty done to animals in stocking the deep freezers in supermarkets than in the highly inefficient but necessary culling of foxes by hunting.

Neutrals observing the two sports on the hunting field today, like many bouncing on it, will support that other honourable old English tradition of shouting for the underdog — and wish the old fox a good run for his money. Run, Reynard, run.

GOOD THINGS, GREAT THOUGHTS

Christmas Past: a series on the unchanging face of the season.
Seven: From The Times of December 27, 1932

This morning's Great Thought is that from Land's End to Berwick-on-Tweed, from Lowestoft to St David's Head, today has been declared an extra Bank Holiday. This, as the authors of 1066 and All That would put it, is a Good Thing, though, like other good things, it may have its drawbacks.

The heads of families, for instance, with shrunken incomes that will not run to unlimited holiday treats, and such tradesman as would prefer to keep their shops open, may have their own ideas about it. But to the generality of mankind, owing to the frailty of human nature and the inherent laziness of the flesh, the prospect of what schoolboys call a long lie-in is undoubtedly a Good Thing in itself.

So, too, is the blessed Sabbath relief of not having to run for the 8.52 up or a Number 11 omnibus on the way to the daily round of all the trivial tasks that between them make this busy little world of ours go round.

But what about the rest of the day? For this, besides being an extra Bank Holiday, is a second Boxing Day, on which, as the dictionary tersely remarks, "Christmas boxes, or presents, are given to errand boys, postmen, &c.". Some fraction of every penny that we put into an outstretched hand goes indirectly to increase the amount of employment, and so to help the great army of men and women who are condemned for at least some part of the year to a life of enforced idleness the very reverse of a holiday, because so many mills and pits and steamships are silent and smokeless and so

many shops half empty of customers.

In America, where most things, including unemployment, gangsters, bullion, Hollywood, and tariff walls, are on a grander scale than in this tiny island, the several States enjoy between them no fewer than ten public holidays, not counting Christmas Day and Good Friday, as compared with our paltry four. The full list begins with New Year's Day and ends with the anniversary of the Pilgrim Fathers' first Harvest Thanksgiving, besides commemorating the birthdays of Lincoln and Washington and the day on which Columbus first set eyes on the New World.

It may, perhaps, be a Good Thing for the citizens of both nations to reflect that though, in spite of our longer history, our own list is shorter, both countries have a common bond and memory in Armistice Day, and that their Labour Day is bound to suggest to us as well as to them the common need, by concerted action or mutual concessions, or both, to reduce the growing volume of unemployment to the lowest possible figure. Tomorrow, when we go back to work, it may help to lessen the shock of "that Monday feeling", none the less trying because it has been postponed for two days, if we bethink ourselves that here and in the United States and the whole of the world to which we all belong there are, on these lines of common ideals and common action, many Good Things to be thankful for and to be done and many Great and inspiring Thoughts to be thought out and carried into speedy action.

Inadequate care for our animals

From Mrs Joanne Bower

Sir, A letter from 14 farm animal welfare groups and individuals, including several vets and farmers, was delivered to John Gummer, minister of agriculture, on December 9 asking for urgent action to ensure:

1. An eight-hour maximum total transport time for animals from the point of sale to ultimate destination for either slaughter or finishing.
2. The retention of the current lairage (resting place) requirements for all animals being sent overseas, in view of Britain's natural sea boundary.
3. Regulations for animal transport throughout the EC similar to those already in use in the UK.

These would apply until such time as the detailed amendments to the EC Directive on transport are implemented.

On December 10 Mr Gummer announced in the Commons, from January 1, a 15-hour transport time before feeding and watering (no maximum limit to journeys) and an end to a mandatory requirement for animals to be rested at a lairage. On December 16 he also announced a lifting of the ban on the export of animals to Spain for slaughter, which was imposed because of the appalling conditions in Spanish abattoirs.

As the EC Directive is not yet finalised and member states are allowed to retain their own rules until it is complete, the action of the minister in down-grading our regulations in this way is incomprehensible.

Yours faithfully,
JOANNE BOWER
(Honorary Secretary),
The Farm and Food Society,
4 Willifield Way, NW11.
December 18.

From Mr Colin Smith

Sir, There can be few images which more poignantly express the horror of animal experiments than your photograph (December 23) of the macaque monkey undergoing tests before being launched into space in a Blon rocket for a joint Russian-American space biology project, allegedly to monitor the brain's reaction to weightlessness.

While one admires those humans who willingly volunteer for pioneering space-travel exploits, many of us feel only contempt for those who subject other sentient beings to physical and mental torment which they dare not face themselves. Setting aside the moral aspects, experimentation on animals is a crude and unscientific method of research into the human condition and we can but hope that 1993 may herald a new and enlightened age.

Yours faithfully,
COLIN SMITH
(Secretary-General, International Association against Painful Experiments on Animals),
29 College Place,
St Albans, Hertfordshire.

Hospital closures

From Mr D. L. Crosby

Sir, Simon Jenkins ("Suffer the little children", December 16) is right to deplore the unscrupulous tactics used by Bart's in resisting closure. Problems similar to those facing Bart's exist nationwide.

Split-site or duplicated medical specialities as well as outdated inefficient hospitals are common and, as in London, are sustained by self-interest lobbies, misguided loyalties and weak management by health authorities. Much of the so-called under-funding of the NHS is due to this failure to make better use of resources.

It has long been plain to me that all those who are acutely ill and need admission to hospital are best treated in large, single-site centres which are fully equipped and constantly staffed. Whilst medical teaching and research are vital investments for the future, it is high time that they were organised to fit in with patient care rather than vice versa.

Yours faithfully,
D. L. CROSBY
(Consultant Surgeon),
University Hospital of Wales,
Heath Park, Cardiff.

From Mr Anthony Wierler

Sir, Why not move Bart's to Beds, Guy's to Guildford and St Thomas's to Telford — so that the names are preserved? Only the buildings need be destroyed.

In sorrow over that, too,
Yours sincerely,
ANTHONY WIERLER,
Feathercombe, Hambledon,
Nr Godalming, Surrey.
December 21.

Life's pilgrimage

From Mr John Raybould

Sir, While changing buses recently in the Aldwych I overheard a rather confused and elderly nun ask the bus conductor how she could get to the Angel.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN RAYBOULD,
The Old Vicarage,
High Street, Newport,
Saffron Walden, Essex.
December 24.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Debate on the future of the Crown

From Mr Ian Flintoff

Sir, In his cogent analysis of the future of the Crown ("Who should be president of Britain?", December 18) Ludovic Kennedy fails to note that, as words and concepts are modified by history, we do now have (in the strictest sense of the word) a president of Britain (i.e. one who "presides" or sits in the first position), albeit a hereditary one. In the United States, on the other hand, and again in the true sense of the word, a monarch (or single ruler) is chosen by election.

The question, then, is not whether we should have a president (whether by birth or vote) but what that president may most usefully do.

What may be most lacking in modern societies is the ballast of considered and unorthodox opinion to temper the flood of media conformity. Our social and individual behaviour — especially by the young — is now so indoctrinated by media conformity (in everything from clothes to "relationships") that the most useful role of presidency may be to outspoke scepticism and examination of these flood-tide trends that sweep all before them.

For this reason, unrepentant socialist though I am, I think the Prince of Wales has already laid the groundwork for such a future role. By being willing to face down ridicule and derision he has shown that infectious trendiness, though often harmless and entertaining, may not be the best way to sustain and develop social systems or to enhance the social environment.

Yours sincerely,
IAN FLINTOFF,
22 Chalidon Road, SW6.
December 18.

From Mr David Watt

Sir, It may be, sadly, that the world today is in many respects "shrunkened and utilitarian", but it need not always be so.

The truth is that our monarchy, loved by countless millions of people in this country and around the globe, is almost the only institution which, when allowed some respect and privacy, can time and time again lift us out of this utilitarian world in a way

which the shrunken proposals of Mr Kennedy could never do.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID WATT,
14/1 Sandport,
King's Landing, Edinburgh 6.
December 18.

From Mr R. S. E. Hoy

Sir, For too long we have been doubly affronted: we have endured a monarch when such an anachronism is decades past its sell-by date, and a monarch who is an indifferent example of the species. Why not invite her to stand as one of two candidates for inaugural, elected president?

Yours etc.,
RICHARD HOY,
Coldwells, Bugbrooke Road,
Gayton, Northamptonshire.
December 18.

From Sir John Stokes

Sir, What a depressing republican article by Ludovic Kennedy. The "weird customs" he mentions are loved by most ordinary people and the pageantry of the ceremonies satisfies a human need. Oaths are still taken to the Queen in person, giving a further cohesion to the nation as a whole.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN STOKES,
Top Barn, Church End,
Haddenham, Buckinghamshire.
December 18.

From Dr D. Landsborough and Dr J. Landsborough

Sir, In a tribute to his old friend, Dr Albert Schweitzer, the late Sir Clement Cheeseman recalls a remark made by Schweitzer in 1955, shortly after he had met the Queen: "How wise you English are... to conserve the monarchy. Others have thrown it away to their loss and have got a very inferior substitute. You conserve your ideals and liberties in living flesh. Others have degradations and stone monuments."

We agree.
Yours faithfully,
DAVID LANDSBOROUGH,
JEAN LANDSBOROUGH,
64 Cordrey Gardens,
Coulson, Surrey.
December 19.

From Mr Brian Gordon

Sir, Lord Mayhew's reference (letter, December 23) to Israeli "ethnic cleansing" in relation to the Arabs who previously left Palestine is a distortion of history.

The Arabs who left Palestine in 1948 and Israel in 1967 did so of their own accord and were encouraged to do so by the surrounding Arab countries. Since then, the Palestinian problem has continually been exploited by the Arab world as a weapon against Israel.

Never has there been more evident than now as 400 Palestinians are being allowed by their brothers to languish in freezing cold conditions in Lebanon.

If Lord Mayhew wishes to cite examples of ethnic cleansing in the Middle East, he should refer to the 30,000 Palestinians who were massacred in Jordan in 1970, the 300,000 who were recently expelled from Kuwait (some dying on the way) and the many thousands who have been slaughtered by the Syrian occupying army in Lebanon.

Yours faithfully,
BRIAN GORDON
(Vice-Chairman), Lloyd-Herut
Movement of Great Britain,
143-5 Brondesbury Park, NW2.
December 23.

satellites and supplying cargo to space stations, does not run to waste, like so many other British initiatives.

On January 1, 1993, the European Space Agency will begin a three-year study programme with Russia which could lay the pathway for a new-generation space station and a reusable space transportation system. If Britain is to remain in the vanguard of aerospace technology in the next century, it needs to be at the centre of these deliberations.

Yours faithfully,
KENNETH W. GATLAND,
10 Brook Mead,
Ewell, Epsom, Surrey.
December 16.

Serving the presidents

From Mr Pierre Sallinger

Sir, I read with great interest your article of December 17 on one of my successors, Mr Martin Fletcher. I very much admire Mr Fletcher and Martin Fletcher's article was excellent.

The only trouble is the headline. Mr Fletcher was not the only press secretary to be appointed by two presidents.

I was the first, being appointed by John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. When Mr Fletcher was appointed by George Bush, I wrote him a congratulatory letter and told him that he had now deprived me of my status in The Guinness Book of Records as America's only press secretary for two presidents.

Sincerely yours,
PIERRE SALLINGER
(Senior Editor, Europe),
ABC News International,
8 Carburton Street, W1.
December 23.

Dates in mind

From Mr Michael J. Mitchell

Sir, My recollections of important events (letter, December 18) always seem to involve railway stations: Esher station as a schoolboy for the death of George VI (how strange it was to have to sing "God save the Queen" after so many years of the other version) and Waterloo, where President Kennedy's death was announced over the public address system. Also at Waterloo, during the war, there was the announcement "Enemy aircraft overhead, you are advised to take cover." I never go through the station without remembering that.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL J. MITCHELL,
11 Chesnut Terrace, Chardon Kings,
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 071-782 5046.

Ambitious plan for Law Courts

From Mr Leolin Price, QC

Sir, Although the Lord Chief Justice has rightly again drawn attention to the shortage of High Court judges (report, December 1, later editions), there is another shortage. In the Supreme Court there are not enough courts, and space for judicial administration is lamentably inadequate. A truly massive initiative is needed to provide additional courts and space in what, for administrative and judicial convenience, must be a substantial extension of the existing, primarily Victorian, buildings.

The London School of Economics has accumulated over the years an inconvenient assortment of buildings. Its bid for County Hall failed, but its urgent need for appropriate and prestigious relocation remains.

The LSE site is conveniently adjacent to the Law Courts. It should be taken over in order to create an ambitious, but long overdue, major extension of the courts.

This extension could be a great architectural achievement as well as a mastery exercise in good planning and efficiency. Our Victorian ancestors swept aside all obstacles to the building of their new Law Courts. Minor but important opportunities for extending the courts have already been missed. (For example, the old Bank of England branch next to the courts should have been gleefully snapped up.)

Of course, Treasury miserliness will have to be overcome, but this project would at once satisfy an urgent need and provide a morale-boosting demonstration that in the 1990s we can afford and can achieve a major new public building, a necessary relocation of the world-famous LSE, and a great embellishment of our capital city.

Yours truly,
LEOLIN PRICE,
10 Old Square, Lincoln's Inn, WC2.
December 24.

Rev. Green, R.I.P.

From the Reverend Bernard T. Croft

Sir, For once I find myself in disagreement with Philip Howard. Chuedo is not silly but wise to drop the "Rev. Green" ("Vicears are sinking in the social scale if they can't be murder suspects", December 13). In time this may help to rid us of the solecism (an Americanism) of attaching the title Reverend straight onto the surname of the clergyman without a Christian name (or at least initials) intervening.

The Reverend is a title, not a rank. Agatha Christie and Dorothy Sayers were educated writers. So the Reverend Leonard Clements, the Reverend Theodore Venables and the Reverend Simon Goodacre are all correct. Not all priests are vicars, and Father Brown carries the affectionate and useful handle to his name which is given to Roman Catholic priests and some Anglican ones.

Also right are Colonel Mustard, for instance, or Archdeacon Grandley. But who, claiming to be educated, would write or speak of Hon (or even Honourable) Smith?

Yours faithfully,
BERNARD T. CROFT,
4 Freeman's Court,
Water Lane, York.
December 17.

From Mr R. V. Taylor

Sir, Philip Howard need not "journey to the exotic shores of Umberto Eco... or Ellis Peters" to find a fictional clergyman as murderer. In *The Hammer of God*, Father Brown uncovers the village vicar, the Reverend and Honourable Wilfred Bohun, as the killer.

Can we now look forward to some dirty deeds by fictional clergymen?

Yours sincerely,
R. V. TAYLOR,
14 Waxes Close,
Abingdon, Oxfordshire.
December 17.

From Mr K. R. Chapman

Sir, In *The Crowning Hen* by Reginald Davis, published in 1936, the vicar did it. On reading this book at the age of 14 I was quite shocked by the revelation in the last chapter. Like Mr Howard, I had assumed this to be impossible.

The vicar was, of course, quite mad: so I suppose this made it alright.

Yours faithfully,
KENNETH CHAPMAN,
Pine Platt, Heath Ride,
Finchampstead,
Nr Wokingham, Berkshire.
December 17.

Better days ahead

From Mr P. C. R. Whittle

Sir, I have an old ashtray on my desk in which I keep paper clips (I don't smoke, and it is a convenient container). I keep it topped up with surplus paper clips from incoming post. Over the last two years the level has fallen slowly.

Recently, however, I have noticed the level has started to rise. Although none of the paper clips are green, this is clearly a sign that the recession is over.

Yours faithfully,
P. C. R. WHITTLE,
Smith-Woolley (chartered surveyors),
8 Oxford Street, Woodstock, Oxford,
December 24.



COURT CIRCULAR

SANDRINGHAM, NORFOLK
December 27: A Service of Lessons and Carols was held in Sandringham Parish Church this morning.

The Duke of York has accepted the appointment as Visitor to the Royal Hospital School, Holbrook.

Birthdays today

Air Commodore Molly Allott, former director, WRAF, 74; Mr Terry Butcher, footballer, 34; Mr W.A. Camps, former master, Pembroke College, Cambridge, 82; Mr D.B. Carr, cricketer, 60; Sir Andrew Mailland-Magill-Crichton, former vice-chancellor, Port of London Authority, 82; Sir Bayard Dill, barrister, 87; Mr T.W. Gould, VC, 78; Mr Max Hastings, editor-in-chief, *The Daily Telegraph*, 47; Mr Roy Hattersley, MP, 60; Mr Nigel Kennedy, violinist, 36; Mr Michael Marland, educationist, 58; Mrs Frances Morrell, former leader, ILA, 55; Sir Patrick O'Connor, former Lord Justice of Appeal, 78; Mr Simon Raven, author and dramatist, 65; Professor E.J. Richards, aeronautical engineer, 78; Mrs Joan Ruddock, MP, 49; Dame Maggie Smith, actress, 58; the Right Rev W.J. Westwood, Bishop of Peterborough, 67; the Hon Geoffrey Wilson, chairman, Delta Group, 63; the Marquess of Zetland, 55.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Alexander Keith Johnson, geographer, Penicuik, 1804; Samuel Phillips, journalist, 1814; Thomas Woodrow Wilson, 28th American President 1913-21; Staunton, Virginia, 1856; Pio Baroja y Nessi, novelist, San Sebastian, Spain, 1872; Sir Arthur Eddington, astronomer, Kendal, Cumbria, 1882.

DEATHS: St Francis de Sales, doctor of the church, 1622; Queen Mary II, reigned with King William II 1689-94, London, 1694; Pierre Bayle, philosopher, 1706; Thomas Babington Macaulay, 1st Baron Macaulay, poet, historian and statesman, London, 1859; George Gissing, novelist, St-Jean de Luz, France, 1903; Maurice Ravel, composer, Paris, 1937; Theodore Dreiser, novelist, Hollywood, 1945; Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy 1900-46, Egypt, 1947; Jack Lovelock, surgeon, Olympic 1500m gold medalist 1936, killed in an accident, New York, 1949; Paul Hindemith, composer, Frankfurt am Main, 1963.

The Tay Bridge disaster, 1879. The Peak District was designated Britain's first national park, 1950.

Appointment

Mr Registrar Phipps to be Chief Registrar in Bankruptcy from January 6, in succession to Mr Registrar Dewhurst.

University news

London

King's College

Appointments

Professor Richard Griffiths, Head of the Department of French, has been appointed Vice-Principal.

Appointments to Established Chairs

Dr Manuel Villaverde Cabral to the newly established Prince Henry the Navigator Chair of Portuguese History.

Mr John Langdon of King's College School of Medicine and Dentistry to the Chair of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Head of the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery.

Dr Alison White to the newly established Chair of Community Nursing.

Personal chairs

The following have had personal professorships conferred upon them:

Dr Gordon Davies, Professor of Physics; Mr C (Robin) Morse, Professor of Law; Mr Kypros Nicolaides, Professor of Focal Medicine; Dr Richard Overy, Professor of Modern History; Dr John Price, Professor of Paediatric Respiratory; Dr Michael Robb, Professor of Chemistry; Mrs Jane Roberts, Professor of English; Dr Diego Vergani, Professor of Immunology.

Resignations

The following have had the title of reader conferred upon them:

Dr Nick Green, chemistry; Mr Andrew Grubb, medical law; Dr Emily Grundy, gerontology; Dr Efraim Karsh, war studies; Dr Mary Mackenzie, philosophy; Dr Malcolm Maden, experimental embryology; Dr Giovanni Mann, physiology; Dr Andrew Pressley, mathematics; Dr Mark Sandler, digital signal processing; Mr John Woolford, English.

City

The following honorary degrees were conferred on December 7:

Sir Francis McWilliams, Lord Mayor of London and the new Chancellor of City University (Doctor of Civil Law); Eric Ambler, novelist and screenwriter (Doctor of Letters); Professor Stuart M. Hall, Professor of sociology, The Open University (Doctor of Letters); The Rt Hon Sir Leonard Hoffman, Lord Justice of Appeal (Doctor of Civil Law); J R Forrest, chairman, National Transcommunications (Doctor of Science); Professor Anthony Ledwith, research director, Pukingtons (Doctor of Science); Maxwell Graham Hebditch, Director, Museum of London (Doctor of Letters).

Forthcoming marriages

Mr G.B. Cooper and Miss H.L. Laws. The engagement is announced between Gies, son of Mr and Mrs Rupert Cooper, of Edington Priory, Wiltshire, and Helen, daughter of Mr and Mrs Brian Laws, of Casteau, Belgium.

Mr A.J. Corlett and Miss J.A. Creggan. The engagement is announced between Andrew, younger son of Mr and Mrs Brian Corlett, of Sully Glen, Isle of Man, and Jane, daughter of Mr and Mrs Donald Creggan, of Braddan, Isle of Man.

Mr A.M. Cox and Miss J.A. Groves. The engagement is announced between Anthony, only son of Mr and Mrs Harold Cox, of Sedgley, and Janet, only daughter of Mrs Barbara Groves and the late Mr William Groves, of Wolverhampton.

Mr S.M.W. Curtis and Miss C.H. Farrant. The engagement is announced between Simon Morton Whitford, son of Mr and Mrs Timothy Curtis, of Johannesburg,

South Africa, and Caroline Heathcoat, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs David Heathcoat Farrant, of Johannesburg, South Africa.

Mr D.K. Edwards and Miss E.J. Benson. The engagement is announced between David, son of Mrs Edwards, of Belfast, and Jane, daughter of Mr and Mrs J.P. Benson, of Southwell, Nottinghamshire.

Mr S.V.G. Irwin and Miss F.M. Barbour. The engagement is announced between Simon, younger son of Mr and Mrs T.G. Irwin, of Bransley, Surrey, and Fiona, daughter of Mr and Mrs J.A. Barbour, of Furness Green, East Sussex.

Mr J.S. Kilgour and Miss V.A. Kilpatrick. The engagement is announced between John, youngest son of Mr Elizabeth Kilgour and the late John Kilgour, of Lower Largo, Fife, and Victoria, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs David Kilpatrick, of Kilmillar, Argyll.



Only 362 days left: Joanne Rostrow, an artist with Hallmark, working on the final preparation of Christmas cards for next year. The two teddy bears whose fur is being carefully brushed into place will find themselves classified in the card racks in December 1993 as "cute", a section growing in popularity almost as fast as "nostalgia", the card makers say

Piping

Little to lament as the Scots come down to London

BY ANOUS NICOL

THE last of the piping events in the year is that of the Scottish Piping Society of London. It is popularly believed in Scotland that there are no Scots in London, and particularly no Highlanders. You only have to come to London to see how ridiculous that belief is. As much Gaelic is to be heard in London as in Inverness, and the number of pipers who congregate at the Glasgow's Hall each year, and have done so since 1932, give the lie to the contention.

The championship is a prestigious one: a number of leading pipers always come down from Scotland. The Bratach Gorm trophy is amongst the most valued of awards for pibroch, as is the London Medalion for cel bag. The overall winner of the championship will have won prizes in two or more of the principal events.

There were some good tunes to be heard in the Bratach

competition, especially in the afternoon. The Bratach itself was won by Jack Lee, with *Lord Lovat's Lament*. William MacCallum, playing the second setting, *The Battle of Auldern*, the same tune that he played in the Glenfiddich Championship, won second prize. The Donald Mackay Trophy, in third place, Pipe-Major Iain Mace played *The End of the Great Bridge*, to take third place. Cill Chriost brought Colin MacCallum fourth prize, and Jack Lee, in fifth place, played another enigmatic tune, *Scars of Fishing*.

The Highland Club pibroch competition is intended for those who wish to retain their amateur status. It was won by Alan MacCall, this year's winner of the MacGregor Memorial prize at Oban, who played *The Battle of the Pass of Crief*. In second place, to win the R G Lawrie Ram's Head Snuff Still, came Corporal Ewen Stewart, with *The Macleods Salute*. In third place, another former MacGregor winner,

Graham Mulholland, played *The MacDougalls Gathering*. By the end of the London Medallion competition, for march, strathspey and reel, five pipers had collected enough points towards the overall championship that the result hung entirely on the pip competition with which the event ends. The winner of the medallion was Pipe-Major Alasdair Gillies, putting him in the lead together with Roderick MacLeod, who came second, and Murray Henderson, who came fourth. William MacCallum, in third place, remained one point behind the overall leaders. As always, there was a large entry for the jigs. The winner was Roderick MacLeod; William MacCallum took second prize, and Corporal Gordon Walker third. MacLeod's first prize put him clearly ahead of the other contenders, to win the 1992 London Championship. Full results:

1. Pibroch: Roderick MacLeod; 2. William MacCallum; 3. P.M. Alasdair Gillies; 4. Murray Henderson; 5. Roderick MacLeod. 2. Pibroch: Roderick MacLeod; 3. P.M. Alasdair Gillies; 4. Murray Henderson; 5. Roderick MacLeod. 3. P.M. Alasdair Gillies; 4. Murray Henderson; 5. Roderick MacLeod. 4. March: Strathspey and Reel: Roderick MacLeod; 2. Roderick MacLeod; 3. William MacCallum; 4. Murray Henderson. 5. March: Strathspey and Reel: Strachan Trophy: 1. Scott Drummond; 2. Spt Michael Elder; 3. Gavin Walker; 4. Colin Drummond. 6. March: Strathspey and Reel: Highland Society of London Targe: 1. Gordon MacLean; 2. Allan MacCall; 3. Graham Mulholland. 7. March: J.B. Robertson Trophy: 1. Jack Lee; 2. Murray Henderson; 3. Cpl Gordon Walker. 8. Jig: Beaton Cup: 1. Roderick MacLeod; 2. William MacCallum; 3. Cpl Gordon Walker. 9. Gaelic Air and Jig (Under 18): 1. Graham Mulholland; 2. Gordon MacLean; 3. Fraser Walker.

Nature notes

CANADA geese are flying around in flocks in the morning. Though such large birds, they have a curiously slow, light wingbeat, almost like seagulls. They honk together as they go like a chorus of trumpets.

Sparrows are hunting along the woodland paths: they do not mind frosty weather, since they have a greater chance of picking up a small bird weakened by hunger. Mist also helps them to pounce unseen on a victim they have detected by ear.

Blue tits are feeding mainly in oaks and birches: when it is cold and they fluff their feathers out, a black line appears along their yellow stomach as the dark base of the feathers becomes visible. Great tits come down to the ground to feed, especially where there are still nuts lying under beech trees.



The sparrowhawk

The large leaves, like arrowheads, of the wild arum or cuckoo-pint are already up by damp ditches. In the woods, there are patches of ground ivy leaves. This wild flower is no relation to the real ivy: its heart-shaped leaves are furry and sweet-smelling. On ash trees, the thick ragged boughs of keys or seeds glimmer orange in the winter sunlight.

DJM

RAF College Cranwell

Air Vice-Marshal J. M. Brook, Director General of Medical Services (RAF), was the Reviewing Officer at the graduation of six officers of No 144 Initial Officer Training Recourse and 19 officers of No 250 Specialist Entrant and Re-entrant Course from the Royal Air Force College Cranwell on December 17.

Graduating officers of No 144 Initial Officer Training Recourse: General Duties Branch - Pilot Acting Pilot Officer P J Farrant; General Duties (Ground) Branch - Air Traffic Control: Acting Pilot Officer P J Farrant; Engineer Branch: Flying Officer A MacKenzie-Orr BSc, Flying Officer D B Edwards MEng; Administrative Branch - Education: Flying Officer S H Scott; Security Branch - RAF Regiment: Acting Pilot Officer A J Munro; Specialist Entrant and Re-entrant Course: General Duties Branch - Pilot Flying Officer S R Hathaway BSc; General Duties (Ground) Branch - Fighter Control: Flight Lieutenant P W Currie BSc Arch, Flying Officer J C Louca LLB; Medical Branch: Flight Lieutenant J M E Brunsell, T Burton, Nicola J Carroll, S J Conyon, K P Hill, P M Monney, Helen M Whitaker, J R Howard; Dental Branch: Flight Lieutenant M S Howe BDS; Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service: Flying Officers James J G Brewster, P G Dryman, Kenneth M Duffy, Bruce C Jenner, C A Smart; Medical Technician Branch: Flying Officer P A Sharp; Chaplain's Branch: The Rev (Flight Lieutenant) C Webb.

Prize Winners: The Colne N Cise Trophy (for the highest standard in leadership training): Officer Cadet S H Scott; The Daedalus Trophy (for the most progress): Officer Cadet P J Farrant; The Specialist Entrant Prize (for the best all-round performance): Flight Lieutenant J R Howell MB BS.

Latest wills

The Right Hon Eleanor May, Countess Castle Stewart, of Forest Row, East Sussex, left estate valued at £1,476,348 net. She left the portrait of her father Sir William O'Brien to the Solomon R Guggenheim Museum, New York.

Mr Raymond Shirley Brooks-Ward, of Purtochton, Truro, Cornwall, the equine expert, commentator and horse show director, left estate valued at £264,559 net.

Mr Thomas William Holmes, of Hazel Grove, Greater Manchester, who died intestate, left estate valued at £1,684,473 net.

Mrs Georgia Brown Wilson, of Los Angeles, California, USA, Georgia Brown, the singer and actress, left estate in England and Wales valued at £23,720 net.

Mr Courtney Thomas Gardner Blackmore, of London SW13, former head of administration at Lloyd's, who helped in the creation of the new Lloyd's building in the City of London, and an Hon Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects and Chairman of its Architectural Awards Trust, left estate valued at £166,214 net.

Mr Geoffrey Charles Kent, of Hill House, Goulston, Nottinghamshire, chairman of the Mansfield Brewery and former chairman and chief executive of the Imperial Group, left estate valued at £926,801 net.

Mrs Angela Christine Wightman Raphael, of Warrington, Cheshire, wife of Oswald P Raphael, left estate valued at £1,145,523 net. As her husband did not survive her for 30 days she left a specific bequest and half the residue to relatives, and half the residue to charities chosen by her executor.

Other estates include (not before tax paid):

Mr Philip St Leger Allenborough, of Linsleigh, Devon, retired company director, £571,659.

Mr Arthur Edward Bradley, of Heath, Cardiff, £755,511.

Mr Alfred Cress, of Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, £503,345.

Mr David Richard Fordham, of Whitcomb, Devon, £585,279.

Dona Mine Isabel Hardie, of Overton on Dec, Cwylid £551,669.

Mr George Francis Marsh Lyser, of London SW19, retired investment manager, £1,041,364.

TEL: 071 481 4000

PERSONAL COLUMN

FAX: 071 481 9313

One person of good sense can make a city, and a whole of lawless people can turn it into a desert. Ecclesiastes 10: 4

DEATHS

POLLARD - Dublin, Ireland on 27th December 1992. At his residence Ashwood Lane, Clonsilla, Co. Dublin. Buried at Glasnevin Cemetery. Family notice.

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OBITUARIES

MONICA DICKENS

Monica Dickens, MBE (Mrs R. O. Stratton), author of a score or more of highly readable and often very funny novels that were read by the million, died in a Reading hospital on Christmas day aged 77. She was born on May 10, 1915.

THE fact that Monica Dickens was a great-granddaughter of Charles Dickens probably did not hinder her rise to become one of the world's most successful fiction writers of her day. Her work, if never in the first rank of literature, had something of his flair for opening windows on parts of the world — the world behind the scenes, the world below stairs, and often the squalid world — that readers liked to look through if they could be persuaded by writing that was attractive enough.

Monica Dickens was a shrewd reporter with a sense of atmosphere that caused John Betjeman, for instance, to call her "one of the most affectionate and humorous observers of the English scene." She was to develop into a shrewd observer of the New England scene, too, after moving there when she married a US Navy officer, and she was a founder of the Samaritans movement in the United States.

Monica Enid Dickens was educated at St Paul's Girls' School, from which she claimed to have been expelled for throwing her school uniform off Hammersmith bridge into the Thames. A self-confessed "fat, rebellious girl," she had apparently taken exception to the box pleats of the official skirt, which did nothing for her figure.

If it is true, as cynics say, that the sure-fire formula for a best-selling romantic novel is the doctor-nurse relationship, she gave herself a head start by training as a nurse during the war. This led to *One Pair of Feet* (1942), a loosely autobiographical story, often comic but with a true feeling for the sadness of hospitals.

It was a sequel to her first, dramatically successful, essay in fictionalised biography, *One Pair of*



Hands, an account of her experiences as a freelance "cook general" at the tail end of the cocktail party era before the war when everybody with middle class pretensions had somebody to do the housework, at least some of the time. First published in 1939, it went through edition after edition, became a set book for school examinations and was still in print half a century later.

One Pair of Hands, although written in the light, gosh-jolly-

hockeystick style of the Thirties, was nevertheless regarded as a slightly daring thing for a girl of her background — she was a pre-war debut — to have ventured through the green baize door to the servants' quarters. Sometimes there were parties where there would be somebody she knew, she would recall: "I had to hide behind a palm, or keep my head down as I cruised the crowd with my tray of Sidecars and White Ladies."

The classic Monica Dickens version of the doctor-nurse love story — with a mature humour that put it far above pulp fiction — was *Thursday Afternoons* (1945). The theme, the tragicomic romantic fantasies of a heroine past the first flush of girlhood, was one she was to return to.

Her nursing training was followed by training as a journalist. This led to *My Turn to Make the Tea*, which remains possibly the truest picture ever painted of life in the office of a local weekly paper. She had an eye for what was funny, but also what was sordid and petty. (The joke in the title was that since she was the only girl in the office, it was always her turn to make the tea.)

For 20 years she wrote a column for *Woman's Own*, continuing to write it when she went to live in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, after marrying Commander Roy Stratton of the US Navy in 1951. As a columnist she had that rare virtue of not taking herself too seriously, weekly dispensing, in her own words "oceans of facile wisdom."

To Americans she was indulgent. "Oh my, Miss Dickinson," she always seemed to be saying. "So Shakespeare was your uncle..." She followed the obvious course of going on the American lecture circuit. Much of the content of lectures, she admitted, was textbook stuff about her great-grandfather, presented as family secrets. It had never occurred to her to question her grandfather about the great man. But she did remember her grandfather at the grand Christmas assemblies of the clan, giving his impersonations of his father reading from the novels. The family tradition was almost that writing had stopped with Dickens' death. Hence the disapproval in the air when she started out as an author.

In 1970 Monica Dickens moved into children's literature with *The House at World's End*, including some of her memories of her own, full childhood. (She had it "translated into American") so that children in the United States could read it. The subtle differences of meaning and

CARDEW ROBINSON



Cardew Robinson, the actor and comedian, died in hospital at Southampton yesterday aged 75. He was born in Goodmayes, Essex, on August 14, 1917.

laughs in the theatre. This was the time when he began to write comic material, not only for himself but for contemporaries including Peter Sellers and Dick Emery.

Away from his most famous character he found time to go straight, making guest appearances on television in *Call My Bluff*, *Celebrity Squares*, *Who Dunnit?*, *Looks Familiar*, *The Small World of Samuel Twee*, *Quick Draw*, *Three Two One* and *The End of the Pier Show*. He was a good interviewer, but when he was interviewed he left the comic interrogations (as he did several times with Wogan), to his host.

The long-running Radio 2 show *You've got to be Joking* was his own creation and was highly popular during its run of five series. He also found time to make several films including *Pirates for Roman Polanski*, *Shirley Valentine* and *A Connecticut Yankee at the Court of King Arthur*. An accomplished after dinner speaker he also wrote catchy songs with Roger Whittaker, including *The First Hello*, *The Last Goodbye*.

Robinson was a quiet studious man, whose private face belied his public appearance. His hobbies were golf (he was a past captain of the Vaudeville Golfing Society), listening to classical music and studying the ways and history of the North American Indians. Robinson was married for 25 years to Eileen Kay, a former dancer who now lives in Miami. They had two daughters who also now live in Florida.

BEST known for the schoolboy character Cardew the Cad that he created in the 1940s, Cardew Robinson was a thin, gangling fellow who always managed to retain his popularity with the public. The Cad was a mixture of the "sons" of Harry Tate in an old-fashioned music hall sketch entitled *Motoring* and the pupils of Will Hay in the immortal *Fourth Form at St Michael's*.

It gained fame for its creator first on the radio and variety stage. Later it became a strip cartoon character in children's newspapers both in England and abroad. It was from this strip cartoon that a film, *Fun at St Fanny's*, was made and brought Robinson new success.

Perhaps the reason for Robinson's continuing popularity when music hall, variety and radio comedy began to leave us was the fact that he was versatile enough to make the switch to other branches of entertainment with little difficulty.

He tackled all types of roles in the West End and was perhaps most widely acclaimed as the comedy lead King Pellenore in *Camelot* at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, during every one of its 650 performances. He also appeared in films and nightclub spots at the same time that his soppy king was raising

INA SOUEZ

Ina Souez, American soprano who appeared with the Glyndebourne Opera regularly before the second world war, died on December 7 in Santa Monica aged 89. She was born Ina Raina in Windsor, Colorado, on June 3, 1903.

INA Souez spent less than 20 years as an operatic soprano. In her early forties she decided that her voice was declining and switched from opera to comedy, appearing with Spike Jones and his City Slickers. The move brought its financial rewards, too. She adapted well to the zany Spike Jones style and had no objection to having trumpeters pulling pigeons from her large hat while she was singing.

But in Britain she was known mainly for her portrayal of Fiordiligi in the first performance at Glyndebourne in 1934 of *Cost fan tutte*. She sang the role for all the seasons up to the outbreak of war and in 1936 added a notable interpretation of Donna Anna. Her singing suggested a strong, well-controlled tone and plenty of dramatic input, allied to a firm command of Mozartian style.

Her guru at Glyndebourne was the conductor Fritz Busch

and it was he who told her later that her voice was beginning to fail. Fortunately the Souez soprano under the Busch tutelage can be heard on the records of the Mozart operas made at the time. Souez could lay claim to be among the first of Glyndebourne's many "discoveries" and the year after her debut there she was at Covent Garden, as Micaëla in *Carmen*, a performance that was described as "clear and musical, joyous, and a thrill to hear."

Ina Souez borrowed her professional name from her grandmother and claimed to be of Cherokee descent. She studied in Denver at the Lamont School of Music, then in Milan with Sofia del Campo. Her debut was in Italy, at Livorno as Mimì in 1928. Her London debut was at a Prom concert conducted by Henry Wood. In 1938 she sang in the Verdi *Requiem* in Stockholm with Fritz Busch, her Glyndebourne mentor. She sang Fiordiligi with the New York Opera Company in 1941 after which her operatic career began to decline. She was a rare example, at the time, of an American soprano whose fame was far greater in Europe than in her own country.



MAJOR-GENERAL ADRIAN HOPE

Major-General Adrian Price Webley Hope, CB, CBE, deputy master general of the Ordnance in the Ministry of Defence, 1964-66, died on December 12 aged 81. He was born on January 21, 1911.

ONE of the most experienced and respected logistic planners in the latter half of the second world war and the first half of the Cold War, Adrian Hope was prevented by air crash injuries from reaching the Army's most senior ranks.

Had he not been badly hurt when a Sunderland flying boat crashed in the Johore Strait in 1946, he would almost certainly have reached the Army Council as either the Quartermaster General or Master General of the Ordnance.

The son of Admiral Herbert Hope CB, CVO, DSO, he was educated at Winchester and Sandhurst and was commissioned into the King's Own Scottish Borderers in 1931. He went with the 1st Battalion to Malta and Palestine, becoming its adjutant when they returned to Portsmouth in 1936.

There he was befriended by the then Brigadier Bernard Montgomery, who took him to Palestine in 1938 as staff captain. Montgomery was invalided home in 1939 but Hope was sent to the Staff College in Haifa in 1940. He never returned to regimental duty.

His experience as a logistic planner began when he became deputy assistant quartermaster general in charge of plans at headquarters in Cairo, working for Wavell when the Italians were defeated in Cyrenaica and Mussolini's east African empire was destroyed in 1941.

After Tunis fell in May 1943, Hope joined Oliver Leese's 30th Corps as assistant quartermaster general for the Sicilian campaign and the invasion of Italy. He clearly established a rapport with Leese, who took over the 8th Army from Montgomery later that year, and went with him to set up a special logistic forward planning team which stayed



together both in Italy and the Far East.

A colleague on the team remarked: "If genius lies in taking pains, Adrian was superb: meticulous in detail, hardworking with never a thought for himself and blessed with an exceptional memory. He was a great man to work for as well as being a delightful companion."

At the end of the Burma campaign, Hope was promoted Brigadier "Q" in the new Allied land forces headquarters for South East Asia, which moved to Singapore after the Japanese surrender.

In March 1946 he was on his way to Tokyo on a special mission to find missing British prisoners of war in Japan. He was taking off from Seletar in a Sunderland when two engines failed on the same side and it turned turtle. Hope was thrown through a hole in the fuselage when the plane broke in two. It was some time before he was found drifting helplessly in the water, with a shoulder crushed and an arm shattered.

The momentum of Hope's career was lost. Invalided home, he spent two years in doctors' hands at a time when he should have been commanding his regiment — a vital step in any regular officer's career. Instead he was given command of the Army's administration school during his convalescence and then became an instructor at the Joint Services Staff College at Latham in late 1948.

By 1951 he was fit enough for overseas service, and was sent out as a deputy quartermaster general in Middle East headquarters during the troubled period of the Abadan crisis, the abrogation of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty and the fall of King Farouk. He was appointed CBE in 1952.

Returning to England, he attended the Imperial Defence College in 1954 before going to the War Office in 1955 as Brigadier (Q Operations), just in time to be closely involved in the planning and execution of the aborted Suez operation.

The logistic plan withstood all the buffeting caused by the political and military misjudgments of the Eden government. His success brought him back into the mainstream of military policy-makers, but too late to catch up in the higher command stakes. After a year as brigadier in the general staff of the Army in Germany he was at last promoted Major General in 1959.

He held three two-star posts before he retired: Major General Administration in Far East Land Forces in Singapore, 1959-61; director of equipment policy in the War Office, 1961-64; and deputy master general of the Ordnance, 1964-66. His CB came in 1961.

He married Mary (Molly) Elizabeth Partridge in 1958. It was a very happy marriage, but too late for children. She died in 1990.

Honi Coles

CHARLES (Honi) Coles, virtuoso tap dancer, has died in New York aged 81.

Lena Horne once said of Honi Coles that he made butterflies look clumsy. It was a fitting tribute to a dancer of superb technique. He was a courtly man who won a Tony award at the age of 71 for his

performance in the Broadway musical *My One and Only*.

A disciple of Bill (Bojangles) Robinson, Coles believed in dancing up on the toes and moving naturally. But unlike Robinson and the Nicholas Brothers he never achieved fame in Hollywood musicals. Instead, he concentrated on stage and concert work, forming a long-time partnership

with Cholly Atkins, whom he met while performing with Cab Calloway's band in 1932. The two men were the last of the "class acts," the tap-dancing pairs who were a feature of the music-hall and night-club cabaret scene from the late 1920s to the late 1940s.

For ten years out of fashion in the 1950s, he then became a major figure in the tap

revival of the 1960s and 1970s. He became president of the Negro Actors Guild and taught black dance and its history at Yale, Cornell, Duke and George Washington universities. He was a master teacher at tap workshops throughout the US and appeared as a guest artist with the Joffrey Ballet in 1977 and 1978.

GERMAN EMPEROR AND WATERLOO

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT) PARIS, DEC. 27.

Many Englishmen must have hoped that some competent French authority would express an opinion on the Anglo-German controversy to which the Emperor William gave rise last week with regard to the battle of Waterloo. M. Henri Houssaye, of the French Academy, has now done so in a letter to the *Gaulois*.

M. Houssaye says that the irritation of the English Press would have been comprehensible if the Emperor William had insinuated that it was the Prussians who won the battle of Waterloo, but he knows military history too well not to be aware that the victory was principally due to the admirable tenacity of the English troops, who all of them stood literally on Wellington's order (there is no other order than to fight to the last man).

When Zieten's Prussians reached the battlefield the two armies were exhausted. The arrival of these fresh troops was sufficient to decide the victory. But it was the English who

ON THIS DAY

December 28 1903

A week earlier, the German Emperor William II, the Kaiser, had proposed the heads of the German Legion which "in conjunction with Blücher and the Prussians at Waterloo, saved the English Army from destruction." A French academician, M. Houssaye, held slightly different views.

up to that moment had kept the victory in suspense. The result is due to the Prussians, but the glory remains with the English.

M. Houssaye then quotes the passage in question of the German Emperor's speech, and observes that nobody ever doubted that without the co-operation of the Prussians the English army would have been routed, thrown back in disorder on the forest of Soignes, and probably annihilated. After recalling some of the incidents of the battle, he says that at Waterloo Napoleon fought two

battles simultaneously, one parallel and the other oblique. He attacked Wellington in front, while on his right flank he was attacked by Bülow. If he had only had to fight one battle, he would have won it. M. Houssaye proceeds thus:—"In the German Emperor's toast, however, I find a misstatement. It is not true to say that the German Legion 'saved the English Army'. Like the Belgians, the contingent of Nassau, and the Brunswick Corps, the German Legion was under the direct orders of Wellington. It contributed bravely and efficaciously to defend the plateau, but it had no decisive action on the issue of the battle. The defence of the farm of La Haye Sainte by Major Baring with nine companies of Hanoverian soldiers deserves, however, to be recalled. He only surrendered that position after having lost 858 men out of 900, while the 42 remaining soldiers had no more cartridges. But the Coldstream Guards defended no less vigorously the farm of Hougomont, where they fought like demons in the midst of the burning barns. English, Prussians, Belgians, Germans, and French all fought that day with the same valour, the same determination, and the same fury. As Wellington said, it was a battle of giants."

Church news

The Rev Mervyn Jennings, Priest-in-charge, Cressing w Tye Green: to be Vicar, Barking-side, St Francis (Chelmsford).
The Rev Graham Joyce, Assistant Curate, St Catherine, Head Green: to be Rector, All Saints, Church Lawton (Cheshire).
The Rev Ken Kitchin: to be Assistant Curate, St Mary, Dalton in Furness (Carnegie).
The Rev Sean Loane, Curate, St Alphege, Solihull (Birmingham): to be Head of Religious Studies, Bromsgrove Lower School, Bromsgrove (Worcester).
The Rev Eugene Maxey, formerly serving in the American Episcopal Church: to be Assistant Curate, All Saints, Odd Rode (Cheshire).
The Rev Philip Miller, Chap-

lain to Burrowswood Christian Centre for Medical and Spiritual Care, Tunbridge Wells (Rochester): to be Priest-in-charge, St Mary's, Combs (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich).
The Rev Gregory Page-Turner, Rector, Askerswell, Lodders and Powerstock: to be also Rural Dean of Lyme Bay (Salisbury).
The Rev Kenneth Povey, Rector, St James, Gawsforth: to be also an Honorary Canon of Chester Cathedral (Cheshire).
The Rev Patrick Thompson, Vicar, St Oswald, Northbury: to be Vicar, St Barnabas, Sutton (Southwark).
The Rev Brian Tigwell, Vicar, Devizes St Peter: to be also Rural Dean of Devizes (Salisbury).
The Rev Peter Tyson, Assistant Curate, Walsall Team

Ministry: to be Vicar, Walsall St John (The Pleck) (Lichfield).
The Rev Paul Welch, Priest-in-charge, Clungrunford St Cuthbert w Clunbury and Clunton, Bedstone and Hopton Castles (Hereford): to be Vicar, All Saints, Wellingborough (Peterborough).
The Rev Don Wims, Assistant Curate, and Minister in charge, St Mary and St Peter, Staines (London): to be Churches Officer for Economic and Social Affairs in the Bolton area (Manchester).
The Rev Canon Roger Williams, Rector, Shipston-on-Stour and an Honorary Canon of Coventry Cathedral: already appointed Rector, Lighthorne w Chesterton and Newbold Pacey w Moreton Morrell (Coventry).

Resignations and retirements
The Rev Richard Bray, Rector, Tye Green w Netteswell (Chelmsford): to retire as from February 28, 1993.
The Rev Michael Hancock, Vicar, Culmstock (Exeter): to retire from April 30, 1993.

The Rev Peter Powne, Vicar, Netheravon w Fiddeton and Enford (Salisbury): to retire from May 18, 1993.
The Rev Jack Reason, Rector, Northwile w Ashbury and Bratton Clovelly w Germansweek (Exeter): to retire from April 30, 1993.

Withdrawal of acceptance
The Rev Mark Bailey, Assistant Curate, Heigham Holy Trinity, Norwich, has withdrawn his acceptance as Team Vicar, Swanage and Studland Team Ministry (Salisbury).

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RACING 20-21

Kondrat celebrates after victory on The Fellow



BUSINESS 26-28

The alternative business awards of 1992



ARTS 23-24

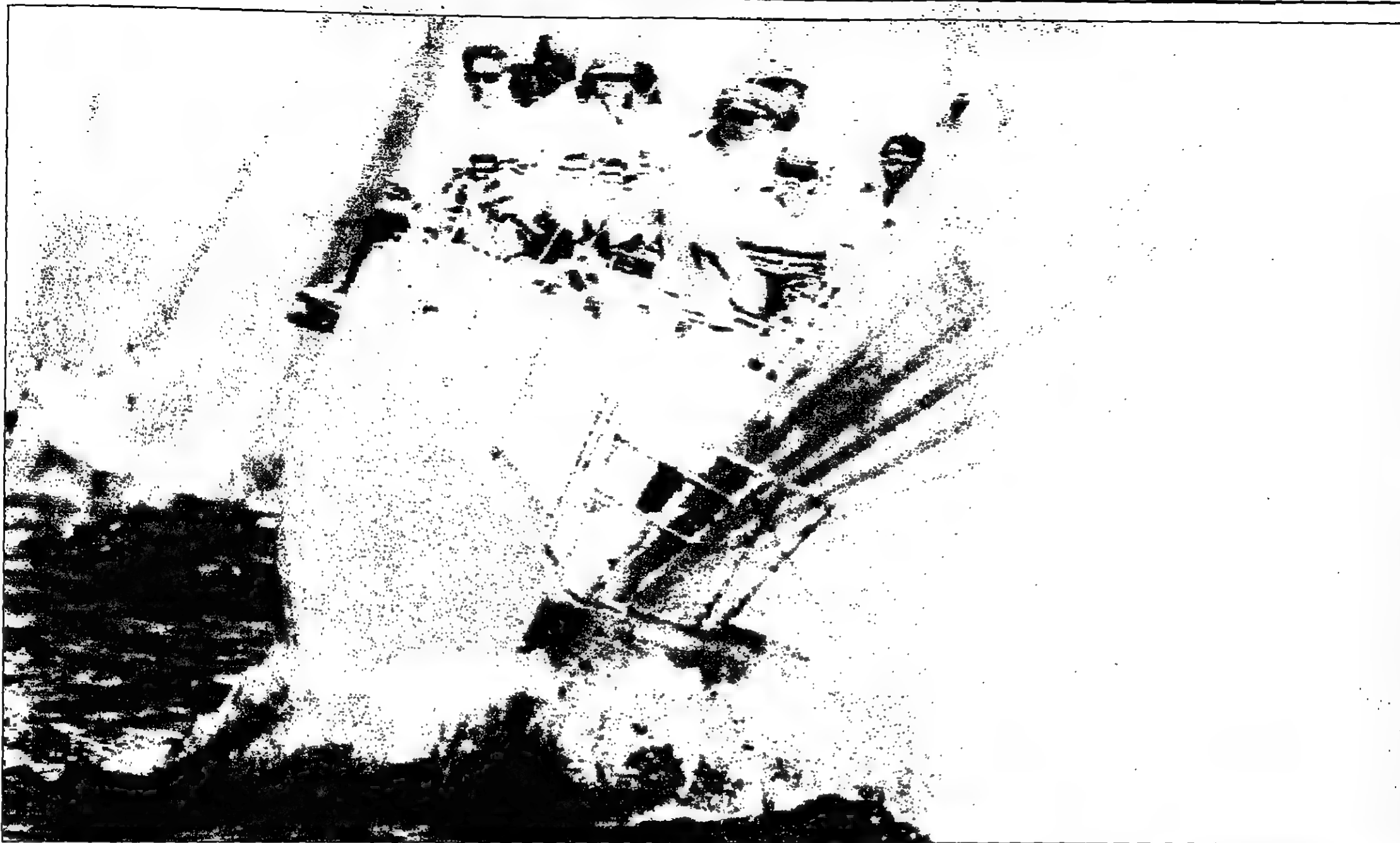
Gerard Depardieu continuing a film tradition

Television and radio
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THE TIMES

2

MONDAY DECEMBER 28 1992



Making waves: The crew of Amazon lead the fleet out of Sydney at the start of the 630-mile race to Hobart. Amazon was in second place yesterday, 20 miles behind New Zealand Endeavour

Smith's toe only concern

By PETER BALL

APART from a delay for the northern contingent, who found even limited air traffic did not prevent their flight from Manchester being put back half an hour, there were no last-minute problems as the England touring party reported to their Gatwick hotel last night in preparation for today's flight to Delhi.

Although the Indian board moved the venue of the match against their President's XI from Kanpur, where there was serious rioting, to Lucknow, doubts about the tour in the wake of disturbances have been put aside. The only fitness concern was Robin Smith, who had been hit on the toe in net practice at Lillieshall. Fears he had broken his toe proved unfounded. "He walked into the hotel OK anyway," Keith Fletcher, the manager, said. With three Test matches and six one-day internationals on the ten-week Indian leg of the tour, followed by a Test and two one-day internationals in Sri Lanka, the trip will try stamina as much as ability.

The players have five days to acclimatise before beginning with a three-day match against Delhi in Faridabad. The first batch of three one-day internationals, in Ahmedabad, Jaipur and Chandigarh, begins on January 21.

Hick's task, page 17

Manchester United confident of achieving ambition without risking Robson

Ferguson relishing title challenge

By STUART JONES AND IAN ROSS

ALEX Ferguson, the manager of Manchester United, yesterday suggested that the final obstacle blocking his club's path to a first league championship in 25 years had been removed: United were, at long last, learning to live without Bryan Robson.

Over the past decade, successive managers of United — and at least one manager of England — have used the absence of Robson as an excuse for inconsistency and poor performances. Ferguson, whose side faces Coventry City at Old Trafford today after moving into third place in the Premier League on Saturday with a 3-3 draw against Sheffield Wednesday, is now confident that United can not only survive, but also prosper without their inspirational captain.

"Bryan will obviously still have an important part to play in the second half of the season, but I do not now need

to rush him back after injury," Ferguson said yesterday. "Against Wednesday, we had a number of players who performed superbly in midfield, particularly Brian McClair; he was outstanding. Because of this, I can see no point at all in putting pressure on Bryan." Robson was not considered for the game today because of a groin injury.

Today marks the start of the second half of the Premier League programme, and any of the top 11 teams can still claim to have a chance of the championship. Ferguson knows this is the day United can seize the initiative. Having seen United recover from a three-goal deficit in the final 22 minutes on Saturday, he is unlikely to tamper with his starting line-up.

Coventry's form since the arrival from Newcastle United of Mick Quinn, 30, has been remarkable: they are now seventh after denting Aston Villa's championship hopes with a 3-0 win on Saturday. Quinn's two goals against

PREMIER LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Norwich	21	12	4	5	34	34	40
Blackburn	21	10	7	4	33	18	37
Wolverhampton	21	9	8	4	28	17	35
Aston Villa	21	9	8	4	31	24	35
Chelsea	21	9	7	5	28	34	34
Coventry	21	9	7	5	28	34	34
Sheff Wed	21	9	7	5	28	34	34
Leeds	21	8	8	5	33	27	32
Manchester United	21	8	8	5	33	27	32
Sheff Utd	21	8	8	5	33	27	32
QPR	21	8	8	5	33	27	32
Liverpool	21	8	8	5	33	27	32
Middlesbrough	21	8	8	5	33	27	32
Tottenham	21	8	8	5	33	27	32
Sheff Wed	21	8	8	5	33	27	32
Southampton	21	8	8	5	33	27	32
Leeds	21	8	8	5	33	27	32
Crystal Palace	21	8	8	5	33	27	32
Everton	21	8	8	5	33	27	32
Oldham	21	8	8	5	33	27	32
Sheff Utd	21	8	8	5	33	27	32
Wimbledon	21	8	8	5	33	27	32
Nottingham Forest	21	8	8	5	33	27	32

Villa took his total to ten in six games for his new club. "Coventry are playing exceptionally well at present and they deserve our respect," Ferguson said.

Meanwhile, Leeds United, the Football League champions, are now more concerned with avoiding relegation. They are sixteenth, three

points above a relegation spot, and their visitors today are Norwich City, the leaders of the Premier League.

"Our reversal in fortune is confusing and amazing," Lee Chapman, the Leeds striker, said after the 3-1 defeat by Blackburn Rovers at Ewood Park on Saturday. "It is difficult to put your finger on precisely what has gone wrong because we have basically the same team as we had last season."

"The players are as concerned as the manager. I think it could be a case of our experiencing the same thing as did Arsenal last season — a dip in domestic form after elimination from the European Cup."

Norwich were eight points clear three weeks ago, but unless they avoid defeat this afternoon, they could lose the place they have held since the end of October.

Journeys to the north have been largely unprofitable for Norwich this season. They won against Oldham Athletic,

but lost twice in Manchester, were beaten heavily by Liverpool, and were humiliated by Blackburn Rovers.

Leeds, for all their feeble away form, have at least resembled champions in their own home. Norwich, without a goal in their last three fixtures, are in their worst sequence of the season. Even if it is extended, though, their leadership promises to be protected by their East Anglian rivals, Ipswich Town. Norwich can be overtaken only if Blackburn become the first team to win at Portman Road this season.

A potentially more consequential fixture completes the programme this evening. Neither Aston Villa, who are the joint favourites for the title with Manchester United, nor Arsenal can readily afford to lose the game which has been selected for live television coverage.

Ron Atkinson, the Villa manager, described their performance at Coventry as "the worst since I've been at the

club. We were hopeless. If we continue to play like that, we won't be title contenders. We'll be relegated."

Arsenal's need to arrest a decline is even more pressing. Since catapulting themselves a dozen places up the table with six successive victories, they have lost almost all the ground they had gained.

The postponement of the game against Oldham at Boundary Park on Saturday gave Graeme Souness, the manager of Liverpool, time to ponder how he should restructure his side after the 5-1 defeat by Coventry City the previous weekend. They take on Manchester City at Anfield today.

United escape, page 19

TITLE BETTING

2-1: Manchester United, 3-1: Aston Villa, 5-1: Blackburn Rovers, 6-1: Arsenal, 8-1: Liverpool, 10-1: Norwich City, 10-1: Chelsea, 40-1: Everton
Odds supplied by Ladbrokes.

Wigan given lesson

WIGAN, leaders of the Stones Bitter rugby league championship, suffered their heaviest league defeat for 20 years yesterday when they were trounced 41-6 at St Helens. It was also their first away loss in league and cup for 13 months and meant that St Helens moved back level with them at the top of the first division.

To compound Wigan's misfortune, they lost Martin Offiah after ten minutes through injury and had Kel-

vin Skerrett sent off in the second half. Offiah faces a month off after dislocating his shoulder and, to make matters worse, Andy Platt and Dean Bell, the captain, have suspected broken hands.

Wigan had opened the scoring with a third-minute try by Bodica, but St Helens replied with seven tries through Hunt (2), Nickle (2), Joynt, Lyon and Ropati.

Wigan's woes, page 20

FA owes much to Croker's forward thinking

TED Croker, who died on Christmas day aged 68, was a man of his time: businesslike and business-orientated. If he helped, in the latter part of the twentieth century, to pull the Football Association finally free from some of its nineteenth-century attitudes, it is arguable whether or not, as secretary from 1973-89, he always pulled that essentially amateur organisation in the right direction.

As a former professional player with Charlton and Headington (subsequently Oxford), Croker knew the game. From his successful subsequent career with his own engineering company, he brought to the FA the kind of contemporary financial acumen and progressive policies that were urgently required by a body predominantly comprised of Shire-folk and schoolmasters who found it uncomfortable being required to pay the England team manager two or three times their own salaries. Football's expenditure was,

as always since the freeing of wages in 1961, tending to run ahead of income, and Croker necessarily accelerated the trend towards marketisation and sponsorship. This inevitably carried criticism and there were occasions when Croker exhibited an uneasy ambivalence in his responsibilities to the so-called show-business end of the game — the senior professional minority — and the vast 40,000-club body of the amateur game.

The difficulty for Croker was the conflicting demand of two spheres playing the same game to the same set of laws but with wholly contrasting motives. While on the one hand, Croker, combining a sharp business sense with an agreeable manner, generated new wealth for the FA, he failed to limit the simulta-



DAVID MILLER

Chief Sports Correspondent

neous growth in greed, violence and indiscipline that were, many would say, a natural consequence of the former.

That charge could, of course, equally be levelled against his predecessor, Denis Follows, and the then chairman, Dr Andrew Stephen. The escalation of indiscipline had begun in the late Sixties. If Follows, organiser of the World Cup in 1966, had not grasped the nettle of professional misbehaviour — so swiftly mirrored all the way to Sunday park football and

the school playground — neither would Croker.

Croker's first important impact epitomised his pragmatism. Having sat on the international selection committee that ended Sir Alf Ramsey's reign and appointed Don Revie — always a move of doubtful wisdom — Croker collaborated with Revie to introduce the England sponsored kit contract with Admiral: a deal that would boost FA revenue at the expense of the public.

The extent to which Croker could become the figurehead

of English football was limited by the election, three years after his own appointment, of Professor Sir Harold Thompson as chairman. Thompson, founder of the Amateur Cup-winning Pegasus club, was almost wholly ignorant of professional football but set about being a hands-on chairman, having at the same time an old-fashioned regard for paid employees. Thompson had hugely resented the power base built by Sir Stanley Rous when secretary. His relationship with Croker was occasionally prickly and often inhibiting.

Croker played a key role in the sensitive negotiations with FIFA over England's and Argentina's appearance in the World Cup finals of 1982 at the time of the Falklands conflict, yet he had supported the provocative English

World Cup mascot, Bulldog Bobby. At home and abroad, the FA would find public sympathy draining away with the escalation of hooliganism.

If Croker had brought the modern financial touch, he remained strangely out of date in the belief that football administration was exclusively his own affair. This led him to say, unwisely, that civil law had no place in the game and, worse, to tell Margaret Thatcher, a prime minister unsympathetic to an indiscriminately spendthrift sport, that the game "does not want your hooligans".

Ted Croker was a friendly man who for several years made a characteristically courageous fight against severe illness. In the fight against the ailments of football, he perhaps did not recognise, in common with fellow administrators, that sport is indivisible from the community; that its survival depends on the tolerance, even the affection, of those who, day by day, have nothing to do with it.

From his successful career in engineering, he brought to the FA the financial acumen and progressive policies urgently required by a body comprised of Shire-folk and schoolmasters

The BLAZER SALE...



LATER THAT NIGHT BERTIE SET OFF AT GREAT SPEED FOR THE BLAZER SALE...

... STARTS
MONDAY 28 DECEMBER
AT 11 AM

Except Broadgate, Fenchurch Street and Canary Wharf.

Premier League front-runners continue to make right impression in exciting draw with Tottenham

Norwich leading by example as they get back on course

Norwich City.....0
Tottenham Hotspur.....0

By DAVID MILLER

WHAT a civil football club is Norwich City, symptomatic of patient, caring Norfolk people. Where else would you find the club chairman out in the car park beforehand, checking there was a place for a visitor on crutches? Where else do you meet such courtesy from the manager, Mike Walker, explaining for the benefit of the media — and thereby the paying public — what was the strategy behind his team changes, and the dropping of Sutton and Beckford?

Norwich, Premier League leaders, achieved what they so urgently needed after two successive defeats: a point, and the reassurance that they stand where they do on merit. They go today to face the champions last season, Leeds United, knowing that five times in the past ten years the Christmas leaders have won the title. I hope they do, too.

As goalless draws go, this was one of the best. On chances, it might have been 7-5 to Norwich, yet Tottenham departed feeling themselves unlucky not to have won, so appealingly subjective is the game. They had had the ball in the net, a stealthy free kick by Ruddock on the hour while the referee was still entangled in Norwich's defensive wall in the attempt — habitually farcical — to establish the statutory ten-yard retreat.

At that moment, sympathy was with Spurs, with missed the referee. It had been differ-

ent on the half-hour, when Austin, judo-style, pulled Fox off the ball by the neck, leaving the unmistakable evidence of gouged turf a yard inside the penalty area. Verdict? A free kick on the line.

There might, too, many of us thought, have been another penalty for Norwich five minutes into the second half. Fox fulfilling his name throughout the match as he ran wild against Tottenham's hen-like full backs, slipped the ball to Sutton. Walker's unexpected replacement for Beckford, Sutton rounded Thorstvedt, unquestionably the man of the match, only to have his left foot caught by Thorstvedt's despairing left arm — not malevolently, but a foul nonetheless — which caused him to lose control.

Thorstvedt's performance was crucial to Spurs' survival. His handling was steady and he made at least four outstanding saves during Norwich's repeated spells of ascendancy.

Spurs, languishing in mid-table, are a contradiction. They can be as mean-spirited as the next, given the encouragement of, say, Arsenal, and having in their defence that pillar of physical over-commitment, the iron-thighed Ruddock; alternatively, the prospect of a footballing team such as Norwich brings to the fore the skills of Samways, Allen, Barmby (replacing Durie) and Sheringham.

On Saturday we saw a bit of both. Tottenham's midfield quartet of Howells, Samways, Anderton and Allen had the best of the early spell and were close to scoring when Bowen cleared off the line. Barmby's spirited running was pulling Norwich's rearguard — New-

man deputising for the injured Butterworth — out of position.

Now Norwich took charge, recapturing the crisp inter-passing that deserted them against Ipswich, and for the next 50 minutes seemed destined to win. Megson and Crook wrestling midfield control, Fox and Phillips running like the wind on the flanks.

Midway through the second half, Ruddock revived Spurs, after his disallowed free kick. Setting Allen free on the right, Ruddock kept going on a run towards the far post, and was there to meet Allen's away-swinging early centre. Ruddock headed fiercely downwards past Gunn, only to see the ball leap up over the bar.

Samways had two fierce drives that flew close; at the other end, Sutton, Fox and Phillips had shots blocked. It was anybody's match to the final whistle.

"Now we've got a name for playing football," Walker reflected, "teams come here to stop us. So we have to work at other ways of breaking them down. We have to dig in. We're still learning every match."

He's the sort of manager you would like to play for, so Sutton and Beckford should not mind being dropped, allowing the renewal of the early-season midfield partnership of Crook and Megson, the latter's bite proving valuable.

NORWICH CITY: B. Gunn; C. Cookehouse, M. Bowen, R. Newman, J. Palsion, G. Megson, I. Crook, C. Sutton, M. Roberts, S. Fox, D. Phillips. TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR: E. Thorstvedt, D. Austin, J. Edinborough, V. Samways, G. Howells, N. Ruddock, O. Howells, N. Barmby (replacing D. Durie), D. Anderton, E. Sheringham, J. Allen.



Ahead of the rest: Sutton climbs highest to win the ball for Norwich City at Carrow Road on Saturday

Late rally fails to satisfy Ferguson

Sheffield Wednesday.....3
Manchester United.....3

By NICHOLAS HARLING

IT SAYS much for the parsimonious tendencies peculiar to Scots that the first emotion expressed by Alex Ferguson after Saturday's game at Hillsborough should be one of disappointment. When most managers would have shouted their relief from the rooftops of Sheffield at gaining a point where none seemed plausible, Manchester United's was feeling frustrated.

United's spectacular comeback in the space of 15 minutes from three goals down sealed a glorious march, which was the echo of Boxing days past. Yet Ferguson felt United should have gone on to win after Cantona struck the equaliser six minutes from time. "I thought we could have finished it off," he said.

Sheffield took a 2-0 lead in six minutes through Hirst's low drive after Ince's hushed clearance and Bright's short-range stab after Hirst had nudged back Waddle's cross. Waddle's first-half performance had been magnificent.

He delivered an endless supply of crosses to the far post where Francis considered that United were weaker. Sharpe's contribution for United after the interval was just as telling but he was not to make a significant impact until Hirst had knocked down Nilsson's cross for Sheridan to bag Wednesday's third goal.

"Sharpe started to get into areas where Wednesday were not doing anything about it," Ferguson said. "Giggs, United's more covered winger, failed to last the match and was substituted after Sharpe had provided the right-wing cross from which McClair headed United's first goal after 67 minutes. "Once we got a sniff, we went for it," Ferguson said, and so United did, with McClair heading their second from a left-wing cross by Sharpe. From the same flank Sharpe's next cross found Cantona sliding in to connect at the second attempt, for the equaliser.

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY: O. Woodie, R. Nilsson, N. Worthington, C. Palmer, V. Anderson, S. Smith, D. Wilson (sub. Heston), D. Waddle, D. Hirst, M. Bright, J. Sheridan. MANCHESTER UNITED: P. Schuster, P. Parker, D. Ince, S. Bruce, L. Sharpe, G. Cantona, P. Hargreaves, S. McClair, M. Hughes, S. Goss (sub. A. Kanchelskii).

Referee: A. N. Evans

Everton's generosity gives too much away

Everton.....2
Middlesbrough.....2

By IAN ROSS

HOWARD Kendall, the Everton manager, has suggested that the line between success and failure was at its narrowest at Goodison Park. On Saturday, the Merseyside club's supporters must have left wondering if he was not right on the mark.

Kendall's comments should be regarded as nothing more than a reaffirmation of faith in a side that continues to disappoint. Working within the confines of a seemingly inflexible financial framework, Kendall has constructed a team which, while unlikely to claim honours, should at least be capable of treading water until an opportunity for squad strengthening arises. But, sadly, too many of Everton's players are falling short of required standards.

On Saturday, for long periods, their supporters must have felt like a child whose most cherished Christmas present lay inactive for want of batteries, such was Everton's failure to add a decisive flourish to promising moves.

If Everton's problem was creating chances, Middlesbrough's was accepting them. During an afternoon when the injured Keown's absence was often exploited, they missed six excellent openings.

While Rideout, a journeyman footballer, could hardly claim parity with his club's more famous centre forwards, Everton were indebted to his ability to pursue lost causes successfully. Rideout headed his side in front shortly after the interval, but, all too predictably, it was to signal a lapse in Everton's concentration which was punished by Hignett just two minutes later. Beardsley's penalty in the 66th minute, awarded after he had been fouled by Whyte, should have ended Middlesbrough's resistance, but Everton are often uncommonly generous in a game's final ten minutes, which made Hignett's second equaliser shortly before the end slightly less surprising than it should have been.

EVERTON: N. Southall, I. Snodin (sub. P. Renshaw), D. Wright, S. Bruce, D. Watson, G. Akin, S. Bruce, L. Sharpe, G. Cantona, P. Hargreaves, S. McClair, M. Hughes, S. Goss (sub. A. Kanchelskii). MIDDLESBROUGH: S. Pearce, C. Fleming, J. Phillips, N. Morris, D. Whyte, J. Paddock (sub. W. Falcou, J. Hendry, A. Pease, J. Wainman, C. Hignett, T. Wright). Referee: R. Groves.

Highbury left hungry by Ipswich's starvation diet

Arsenal.....0
Ipswich Town.....0

By KATH PATE

TAKE a side which has forgotten how to score, add one which makes precious little effort to remove the fitness and summer in a frenetic atmosphere. It is a recipe for undiluted frustration, served before a Highbury crowd hungry for a Boxing day treat.

Arsenal, at least, did their muscular best, attacking almost ceaselessly as Ipswich retreated before them. Their best, though, is just not good enough to win games these

days; one goal in six matches represents emergency rations for arguably the Premier League's most potent strike force.

"We created a lot of very good chances but could not finish them off," George Graham, the Arsenal manager, said. True enough, but unless Arsenal is prepared to alter the ingredients, Arsenal can expect to be starved of their third title in five years.

Anders Limpar, perhaps the one Arsenal player with the pace and trickery to unnerve confident and combative defenders, was given just 14 minutes to pick the locks Wark and company had

fixed on fortress Ipswich. Sadly, but predictably, he failed. By the time he was introduced, John Lyall's team, beaten only twice in 26 games this season, was entrenched in its siege mentality.

Ipswich simply left Kiwomya to plough a lone furrow up front and invited Arsenal to break them down. Inordinate delays at every free kick and throw-in merely added to the home supporters' sense of injustice.

"If everybody starts playing that way we are going to have a lot of boring games," Graham said. "I think these teams realise they are not going to win the champion-

ship, but if you pack the defence you can get some success."

Arsenal hardly helped themselves, too often relying on Campbell's physique or the high ball to Smith. They looked more dangerous when Platt or Wright ran at the defence, and might have scored four times within a hectic five-minute spell around the half-hour mark.

The best chances fell to Campbell, who dragged his shot wide of the far post, and Smith, who headed over Baker's crossbar with the goalkeeper stranded. Wright, having burst into space, then watched disbelievably as his

shot beat Baker and rebounded, bizarrely, to safety off the inside of a post.

Baker perhaps deserved his good fortune. His acrobatic leap to palm away Winterburn's long-range effort was memorable; his instinctive save from Bould's point-blank volley, early in the second half, remarkable. Ipswich then ran down the clock. And to think Arsenal used to be accused of killing matches.

ARSENAL: D. Seaman; P. Lydersen, N. Winterburn, D. Hillier, S. Bould, A. Lyngby, J. Jensen (sub. D. O'Leary), I. Wright, A. Smith, K. Campbell (sub. A. Lyngby), M. Platt. IPSWICH TOWN: C. Baker, G. Johnson, N. Thompson, M. Stockwell, J. Wark, D. Longley, G. Williams, P. Goodard (sub. S. Guntzsch), S. Walton (sub. P. Whelan), J. Driscoll, G. Kivomya. Referee: R. Wright.



Shearer: 22 goals

Shearer raises Blackburn to second place

ALAN Shearer reduced Norwich City's lead in the Premier League to three points with two more goals in a 3-1 victory over Leeds United, the champions, at Ewood Park on Saturday. The result moved Blackburn ahead of Aston Villa into second place. Jason Wilcox was the other Blackburn marksman in the 3-1 win. Gary McAllister replied for a Leeds side now languishing in the lower reaches of the table.

Leeds conceded two goals when their offside trap fell apart and finished well beaten as Shearer took his season's haul to 22.

A near-capacity crowd of close on 20,000 saw Blackburn go ahead in the eighth minute. David May's long ball went through to Wilcox and he galloped away to shoot past John Lukic. The equaliser came, however, in the 38th minute. Colin Hendry had leaned heavily on Lee Chap-

man and McAllister crashed his free kick past Mimmis.

The opening half had run a minute into injury time when Shearer bagged his first. The offside play failed and off went Wilcox to pick up a long free kick and deliver it into Shearer's stride at the far post.

Even though Shearer appeared to be limping after the break it did not prevent him from completing Leeds' misery. Wilcox left Sheridan in his wake and his 59th minute

cross allowed the striker to pounce.

The decline of Leeds United is likely to precipitate the departure of McAllister, the club captain. McAllister, who celebrated his 28th birthday at the weekend, will be offered the chance to join Paris St Germain when his present contract expires at the end of the season.

□ Brian Doyle, the former Manchester City and Stoke City player, has died, aged 62.

Le Saux's stormy exit spoils fightback

Chelsea.....1
Southampton.....1

By PETER ROBINSON

BOXING day came early at Stamford Bridge: unfortunately, too early for Chelsea. The midday kick-off seemed to catch the London side's players with their thoughts still idling down the Kings Road and by the time they realised where they were, they were a goal down.

They came back, in the end, to preserve one of the most consistent records in the Premier League, but this was not a performance to impress the neutral. There have been much better in their run of ten league matches with just one defeat.

Southampton did not help, of course. Once one of the most attractive of teams, they are now one of the most "competitive", or ordinary, depending on whether you support them or not. Chelsea's failure to impose their worthy football on a side intent on single-minded defence was a big disappointment.

Fittingly, for Boxing day, the game turned on a couple of sucker punches. Southampton landed the first after just three minutes as Chelsea slipped in defence. Groves's cross was allowed to drift over a packed penalty area to Dowie, unmarked at the far post, who happily jabbed his shot past Hitchcock.

That, though, was the only sign of seasonal generosity in the first half. Southampton defended their lead as fiercely as they knew how. Chelsea, fighting fire with fire, were unable to turn their ample possession into an equaliser.

It must have been frustrating viewing for their manager, Ian Porterfield, and certainly he spent most of the second half rearranging his team until, by trial and error, he hit on a system that worked.

First, Wise switched from midfield to the right wing, Stuart taking a central role. Things improved but as chances came, they also went begging. Fleck, the biggest culprit, was brought off — and Porterfield tried something else. No joy. Stuart missed an easy header, Donaghy's shot was deflected wide.

Within minutes left, the manager had another go. Le Saux was brought off. Newton moved up front and though the move worked perfectly — Newton levelled with two minutes left as Southampton finally dropped their guard — the finale was overshadowed by Le Saux's controversial exit.

The young winger was furious. Called to the bench, he took off his shirt, threw it theatrically to the ground, picked it up again and launched it at the back of the dugout. Then, still shirtless, he stomped off down the tunnel. It was not the sort of thing that pleases managers and Porterfield soberly promised action would follow. A frustrating afternoon for the promising youngster ended, almost certainly, in a heavy festive fine.

CHELSEA: D. Seaman, C. Hoolahan, G. Hall, F. Sinclair, A. Townsend, D. Lee, M. Donaghy, G. Stuart, R. Fleck (sub. J. Spencer), G. Le Saux (sub. C. Barry), S. Newton, D. Wise. SOUTHAMPTON: T. Flowers, J. Kearns, M. Adams, J. Hirst, R. Hall, K. Morioka, M. J. Taylor, P. Groves (sub. J. Dowie), I. Dowie, N. Macdonald, F. Bardsley. Referee: A. Gunn.

THE TIMES TABLE OF THE FA PREMIER LEAGUE															
Widely ch'ge	P	Pts	Goal diff	W (H-A)	D (H-A)	L (H-A)	For (H-A)	Agst (H-A)	Leading scorers	Offences S-O	Home attendance Avg 92-3	% chng 91-2	Recent form	Next match	
1 (0) Norwich	21	40	0	12 (7-5)	4 (3-1)	5 (1-4)	34 (15-19)	34 (8-25)	Robins 11, Phillips 7	- 12	15,293	+10.3	wwwld	Leeds (a today)	
2 (+1) Blackburn	21	37	+15	10 (8-2)	7 (1-6)	4 (2-2)	33 (22-11)	18 (8-10)	Shearer 16, Ripley 3	2 20	17,797	+34.3	ldwww	Ipswich (a today)	
3 (+1) Man Utd	21	35	+8	9 (5-4)	8 (3-5)	4 (2-2)	25 (12-13)	17 (8-9)	Hughes 8, Cantona 8	- 19	32,797	-27.1	wwwld	Coventry (h today)	
4 (-2) A Villa	21	35	+7	9 (5-4)	8 (3-5)	4 (2-2)	31 (17-14)	24 (11-13)	Alderson 11, Saunders 7	- 11	26,881	+8.2	ldwld	Arsenal (h today)	
5 (0) Chelsea	21	34	+6	9 (4-5)	7 (5-2)	5 (2-3)	28 (18-15)	22 (10-12)	Hartford 8	- 23	20,869	+11.7	wwwld	Wimbledon (a today)	
6 (+1) Ipswich	21	33	+7	7 (4-3)	12 (6-6)	2 (0-2)	29 (16-13)	22 (10-12)	Kiwomya 6	1 17	17,589	+23.2	ldwldw	Blackburn (h today)	
7 (+1) Coventry	21	32	+6	8 (4-4)	8 (3-5)	5 (4-1)	33 (19-14)	27 (15-12)	Quinn 10	- 12	15,446	+11.3	ldwldw	Man Utd (a today)	
8 (-2) Arsenal	21	31	+2	9 (5-4)	4 (2-2)	8 (3-5)	23 (15-8)	21 (9-12)	Wright 11, Merson 3	- 27	25,547	-19.9	ldld	A Villa (a today)	
9 (+2) Man City	21	29	+6	8 (4-4)	5 (4-1)	8 (3-5)	29 (17-12)	23 (11-12)	White 11, Shearer 5	1 20	24,818	-10.4	ldwld	Liverpool (a today)	
10 (-1) QPR	20	29	+3	8 (5-3)	5 (3-2)	7 (2-5)	26 (19-7)	23 (14-9)	Fordinand 7, Parric 5	- 19	15,412	+13.4	ldwld	Everton (h today)	
11 (-1) Liverpool	20	28	+2	8 (7-1)	4 (1-3)	8 (2-6)	34 (23-11)	32 (11-21)	Wallace 8	1 18	34,899	+0.3	wwwld	Man City (h today)	
12 (0) Middlesbrough	21	27	+1	6 (5-1)	9 (4-5)	6 (1-5)	33 (19-14)	32 (10-22)	Wilkinson 8, Hendrie 5	- 19	17,716	+20.5	ldwld	C Palace (h today)	
13 (0) Tottenham	21	26	-6	6 (4-2)	8 (4-4)	7 (2-5)	20 (13-7)	26 (10-16)	Sheringham 6, Durie 3	1 21	28,751	+3.6	ldwld	Notm For (h today)	
14 (+1) Sheff Wed	21	24	-3	5 (4-1)	9 (4-5)	7 (2-4)	25 (16-9)	28 (15-13)	Hirst/Bright 7	- 19	27,412	-7.3	ldwld	Soton (a today)	
15 (+1) Southampton	21	24	-3	5 (3-2)	9 (5-4)	7 (2-5)	21 (12-9)	24 (10-14)	Le Tissier/Dowie 6	1 32	14,690	+4.4	ldwld	Sheff Wed (h today)	
16 (-2) Leeds	21	24	-4	6 (5-0)	6 (3-3)	9 (1-8)	33 (24-9)	37 (12-25)	Chapman 10, Speed 6	- 21	28,840	-2.8	ldwld	Norwich (h today)	
17 (+2) C Palace	21	24	-5	5 (3-2)	9 (5-4)	7 (3-4)	28 (15-13)	33 (13-20)	Armstrong 8	2 17	14,677	-16.7	ldwww	Middlesbrough (a today)	
18 (-1) Everton	21	23	-7	6 (3-3)	5 (4-1)	10 (4-6)	19 (10-9)	26 (14-12)	Beardsley 6	- 9	22,341	-3.5	ldwld	QPR (a today)	
19 (-1) Oldham	20	21	-6	5 (5-0)	6 (3-3)	9 (2-7)	33 (22-11)	39 (15-24)	Sharp 7, Olney 6	- 17	12,057	-20.1	ldwld	Sheff Utd (a Tue)	
20 (0) Sheff Utd	21	21	-10	5 (4-1)	6 (5-1)	10 (1-9)	18 (11-7)	28 (8-20)	Doane/Littlejohn 5	2 38	20,286	-8.2	ldwld	Oldham (h Tue)	
21 (0) Wimbledon	21	19	-7	4 (2-2)	7 (3-4)	10 (5-5)	26 (14-12)	33 (16-17)	Holdsworth 5	2 26	8,382	-7.8	ldwld	Chelsea (h today)	
22 (0) Notm For	20	15	-12	3 (2-1)	6 (2-4)	11 (5-5)	19 (8-12)	31 (11-20)	Bannister/Clough 5	- 9	20,103	-15.3	ldwld	Tottenham (a today)	

TRANSFERS: David Lee (Bolton) from Southampton, £200,000; Mike Wallace (Stockport) from Man City, undisclosed fee. LOANS: David Speedie (Southampton) to Birmingham; Michael Oakes (Aston Villa) to Bromsgrove; Richard Lucas (Sheffield Utd) to Preston; Andy Gray (Tottenham) to Swindon. □ Statistics refer to Premier League matches only.

Mighty Mogul to underline Champion Hurdle claim

MIGHTY Mogul, joint favourite for the Champion Hurdle next March, can press his claims by capturing the BonusPrint Christmas Hurdle at Kempton today.

The David Nicholson-trained five-year-old, unbeaten in four outings this term, has gone from strength to strength and was particularly impressive in beating another Champion Hurdle contender,

MANDARIN

Staunch Friend, at Newbury last time out.

However, Mighty Mogul faces his stiffest test so far with such talented hurdlers as Granville Again, Oh So Risky and Gran Alba in opposition. Granville Again has been disappointing in two races this campaign. After his defeat by

his elder brother, Modley Street, at Cheltenham in November, he failed to get in a blow against Halkoppos on the same course earlier this month with today's rivals, Oh So Risky and Kribensis, trailing in fourth and fifth respectively.

I expect Granville Again to confirm that form today without spoiling the winning sequence of Mighty Mogul, who

looks in such good heart at present.

Nicholson should also be on the mark with Wonder Man, who is napped to complete a treble in the BonusPrint Novices' Chase.

Wonder Man, who, like Mighty Mogul, was formerly trained by Jenny Pitman, has taken well to fences and his agile jumping should prove too much for Jimmy Fitz-

gerald's Phils Pride, who is also chasing a treble after promising victories at Catterick and Market Rasen.

Nick Henderson can also complete a double at this competitive fixture with Tinyland (1.45) and Galaxy High, who missed a tempting Boxing Day engagement here to run in the Bonusphoto Handicap Hurdle.

Martin Pipe should domi-

nate proceedings at Cheltenham, where I expect the champion trainer to saddle four winners, Claxton Greene (12.25), Lord Relic (12.55), Munnemaha (2.00) and Sea Island (3.05).

Pipe has posed quite a problem by saddling five runners for the Coral Welsh National, but I believe his hopes lie with Run For Free and Munnemaha.

Run For Free upset the odds

laid on Munnemaha by making all for a 12-length victory in the Rehearsal Handicap Chase on the Welsh course earlier this month.

However, that was Munnemaha's first run of the season, whereas Run For Free had already won at Haydock. Munnemaha has since finished second again, failing to hold Captain Dibble, who repossesses today, in the SCB

Handicap Chase at Ascot. Pipe's talented nine-year-old spoils his chance by continuing jumping to the left and will be much more at home on today's left-handed track. He is also 4lb better off with Captain Dibble for that two-and-a-half-length beating.

At Wetherby, Waterloo Boy can confirm his Exeter supremacy over Katabatic in the Castleford Chase.

KEMPTON PARK

MANDARIN
12.45 Puritan.
1.15 Wonder Man (nap).
1.45 Tinyland.
2.20 Mighty Mogul.
2.50 Cheltenham.
3.20 Galaxy High.

RICHARD EVANS: 2.50 LE PICCOLAGE (nap).
The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 2.50 SOONER STILL.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT

12.45 BONUSPRINT NOVICES HURDLE

(3-Y-O: £3,817.2m 5f) (9 runners) **C4**
101 40514 BE MY HABITAT 16 (5) (Mrs L. S. Scott) 11-0. M Murphy 81
102 40515 ELITE REB 17 (6.5) (A. L. Jones) 11-0. P. Stammers 81
103 40516 LARKS GENTLY 21 (5) (Mrs L. S. Scott) 11-0. M Murphy 81
104 40517 MY SENIOR 22 (5) (Mrs L. S. Scott) 11-0. M Murphy 81
105 40518 CARROD GOLD 18 (6.5) (Mrs L. S. Scott) 11-0. M Murphy 81
106 40519 MR POPSICLOP 20 (5) (Mrs L. S. Scott) 11-0. M Murphy 81
107 40520 PURITAN 23 (5) (Mrs L. S. Scott) 11-0. M Murphy 81
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By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

Be that as it may, the Union hopes to make this afternoon at the Arms Park a worthwhile family outing as well as offer-

The Barbarians have won 39 of the 73 games played, against Leicester's 29 and a capacity crowd of some 15,000 will watch to see if Leicester can make up the leeway. They will welcome back John Wells, their captain, after an absence of six matches recovering from the broken bone in his hand, and a rare appearance by Dean Richards who has found various unwelcome ways of missing this game in recent years.



BY DAVID HANDER

Knibbs has been playing first-team rugby at Bristol since 1982, is still only 28, and this was his 368th game. In ten years, he has scored

In the previous 367 games, he had garnered only five penalties; and when he went on to kick a conversion from the touchline, onlookers could have been forgiven for wondering whether a resource had not been wasted. His second penalty took him past 500 points, too, which more or less erased memories of Bristol's generous start in which they proffered two gift-wrapped tries.

The Welsh club, fielding —

They included some local knowledge in their pack, since Thomas had played for Clifton and Arthur for North Bristol, and had they taken better advantage of some alarming gaps in Bristol's defensive alignment they might have scored more than their two first-half tries. However, a charged-down

With Newport willing under a volley of penalty awards, the flanker burst down the left touchline, curved infield and established the ruck from which the Bristol backs, on a greasy surface and with an icy wind down their necks, passed sweetly to give the powerful John the overlap and a try in

[illegible]

BY ALAN LORIMER

The A fixture has evolved from the series of B matches, which, in this context, were for non-capped players only. While the most recent B match resulted in a defeat for Scotland, the Scots nevertheless profited, discovering enough talent to ensure a reasonable standard in the five nations' championship at a time when

There will be close attention, too, paid to Andrew Reed, the Bath lock, who has won rapid promotion since playing for the Scottish Exiles this season, and, behind the scrum, to Tony Stanger. The Hawick wing appeared to lose form in Australia but regained confidence in the McEwan's district championship.



BY GERALD DAVIES

Fresh ho

The match was played with heart-warming exuberance. While Ford was in fine form

The clubs will have to define their purpose. For, how long can Cardiff continue to charge, when the first-choice team is unavailable, the same entrance fee as for a league encounter? The crowd will soon dwindle, the match become obsolete. And clubs will then wonder what on earth they will do on Boxing day.

SCORES: Cardini: Trice: C Thomas (2), Ford (4), O Thomas, Sevan: Conversations: C Thomas (5). Penalties: C Thomas (2). Pontypidd: Try: James. Penalty: Jones.

CARDIFF: P. Armstrong, O Thomas, C Thomas, J Howell, S Ford, G Lewis, H Hanks, K Mathews (insp: A Lewis), H Sevan, P Edwards, H Merritt, C Mille, M Edwards, J Allen, G Roberts.

PONTYPIDD: G Jones, S Sappard (insp: R Morgan), J Lewis, Cody (insp: E Jones), J Davies, J Davies, J Edwards, G Phillips, I Pary, S Davies, J Searles, I Phillips, G Weygood (insp: P Cummings), M Williams.

Penalties: C Thomas (4).

By BARRY TROWBRIDGE

There had been a suggestion that London Irish would be fielding maybe ten or so first XV regulars and treating the game as serious preparation for the next League match. But reality got lost somewhere amid the seasonal festivities. Kick-off time, having been 3pm on the fixture list all season, settled via 2.30

Dean Shelford, Wayne's 31-year-old brother, who has been punching holes through the centre all afternoon, finished what should have been an eighth, but the bigger cheer of what was now a very grey day was reserved for Francesco Ferrari, who ran 6

BY MICHAEL AUSTIN

George Hook, the new Fylde coaching director, late of London Irish, has banned the

The sides approached full strength, a rarity for a non-league game, though Dooley, England's most-capped lock, was unavailable for Preston, whose competitive edge was nevertheless razor-sharp as befits their status as promotion

The territorial balance tipped the way of Fyde, whose backs were ignited by Barclay. 23, a former scrum half turned wing, who returned to his previous position after a seven year gap. His break, followed swiftly by a thundering run from Greateux put Preston under the severe pressure which yielded a second penalty goal from Jackson after 51 minutes.

merits of friendly matches.
SCORERS: Flydie: Try: Graetores. Penalty goals: Jackson (2). Preston Grasshoppers: Penalty try. Converselec: Thompson.
FYLDIE: M Jackson; P Seed, S Cornell (try); D Collings, J Aitkins, G Campbell, S Gough, I Barclay, R Alrati, A Moffat, M Hays, T Weighman, T Taylor, P O'Neill, I Ashton, M Graetores.
PRESTON GRASSHOPPERS: E Dolan, J Hinde, J Moore, J Cheshworth, A Taylorson, W Thompson, J Bledsdale, J Nixon, P Carter, R Conner, M Seed, P Grayson, M Battersley, D Grant, M Swind.
Referee: J Foul-Lawrence.

Heriot's, beaten 3-2 in the try count, looked the better side up front, where their

Heriot's **FP** beat **Watsonians**, their **Edinburgh** rivals, 18-15 in an important dress rehearsal for the McEwan's national league match between the sides on Saturday week. For that championship match, Heriot's, second from bottom in the table, ought to have back in their side Ken Milne, the Scotland hooker, and Andy Macdonald, the 6ft 8in lock. Watsonians, too, will be able to strengthen their side with the addition of Gavin Hastings and Roger Baird, the former Scotland, and British Isles wing.

McRobbie, Heriot's strong-running and incisive centre, fittingly scored his side's only try from a move he initiated.

Fixtures in the Midlands were badly disrupted by the weather on Saturday, with the games at Bedford (v Old Paulines), Moseley (v Coventry) and Northampton (v Stirling County) all called off because of frozen pitches. Moseley v Coventry has been rearranged for today.

SWALEC Cup Round 4		
Odds	3	Current
Club matches		
Abertillery	25	Nathan
Bath	28	Callan
Bristol	10	Wendling
Bristol	21	Newport
Cardiff	55	Pontypridd
Cardiff	17	Ap
Dundee H&F	15	Kirkcaldy
Dundee H&F	17	Ap
Fylde	11	Preston G
Glasgow H&F	18	Glasgow AC
Glasgow H&F	17	Westchester
Llangelli	15	London Welsh
Llangelli	46	Ap
Newcastle G	42	Northam
Pontypridd	18	Tredingar
Pontypridd	10	Mid Ff
Wottonians	15	Herford Ff
POSTPONED: Corthorpe vs Celtic		
Peebles vs Royal High		
SCOTLAND: Club matches:		
Brounburgh	24	Dunfermline
Brounburgh	24	Edinburgh North D
Camisburgh	83	Strathaven J
Camisburgh	23	Carlisle
Edinburgh	6	Suaverly 11
Edinburgh	20	Wanderers
Academicals	25	Alton 23
Academicals	23	Falkirk 12

Hawk Y11.9, 3 Bears 2.2, Hoots 2.2
 Partridge 15, Invee 9, Mowla 12, Lats 25
 Academics 18, Preston Lodge 19, 14
 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10
 Montrose and Deslor 15, Glasnevin 18
 Murrefield 19, Forester 23, Pheasants 11
 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10
 Partridge 28, Stobbever 7, Walkerton 26
 Earlton 54

LONDON AND SOUTH EAST: AOT
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 Old Beccleshams 10, Blaisey 10, 10
 Equipment Southern Meent Table: Hen
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 Table: Setup 11, Thurrock 41, Club
 matches: Old Merchant Taylors' 3, 10
 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10
 Wimbledoners 78, Old Trillings 18
 Cosham 17, Old Westlings 3, 10
 Albany 20, Wexley 25, Prescot 10

SOUTH WEST: Club matches: Aefley
 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10
 Avonmouth 19, St Mary Old Boys 17
 Bracton-on-Avon 25, Blandford 15
 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10
 United 35, Taunton United 3, Broad Pate
 10, Old Ashlions 12, Bude 32, Pres
 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10
 Aefley 10, Chipping 10, 10, 10
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 2, Plymouth 13, Bland 18, Haysle 5, St Ives

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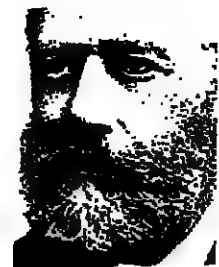
TELEVISION page 24

Enid Blyton was the subject of a dramatised documentary that asked few awkward questions

ARTS

DANCE page 24

Tchaikovsky is back in town, as *The Nutcracker* takes up its annual Festival Hall residency



How they suffered for the camera

In films, composers are always tormented geniuses. Even Gérard Depardieu cannot resist the cliché, writes Geoff Brown

The world has grown accustomed to Gérard Depardieu stomping through the 15th century as Christopher Columbus, or donning Cyrano de Bergerac's big nose, cloak and plumed hat. But it still comes as a surprise to see France's biggest actor in *Tous les Matins du Monde*, powdered wig cascading down, beauty spot on his right cheek, fingers coaxing beautiful, melancholy music from a viol da gamba. He is impersonating Marin Marais, court musician for Louis XIV and leading light of the French school of bass viol players.

In some ways we should have expected it. Stewart Granger, violin crunched under his chin, assumed Paganini's identity for *The Magic Bow* in 1946; forced to start fiddling with a sawn violin instrument, he bleated interperately "How can I get anywhere with a thing like this?" *The Music Lovers* turned Tchaikovsky into Richard Chamberlain. Dr. Kildare with a beard. And Mozart, we all know Mozart: he's the spitting image of Tom Hulce, and the original ugly American.

But when set against cinema's lurid track record in the field, *Tous les Matins du Monde*, directed with cool, probing passion by Alain Corneau, still prompts surprise. Until its French release a year ago, Marais and the viol da gamba were largely the preserve of Baroque music performers like Jordi Savall,

who plays the notes Depardieu and others seem to be fingering. And Saint-Colombe, Marais's teacher (and from some angles the film's central character), is so shadowy a figure that historians remain ignorant of his first name and dates.

Yet in Corneau's film, for all the esoteric trappings, the composers depicted are still cut to a familiar pattern. Cinema loves to follow the 19th-century concept of the artist as sufferer, transmuting human tragedy into masterpieces. No movie composer worth his salt writes simply for pleasure and profit; he puts pen to paper devastated by grief, madness, the pangs of love, or the patron's jackboot.

In *Tous les Matins*, for instance, Saint-Colombe's muse is inseparable from his grief for his late wife, who appears in visions as he sits in a hermit's hut, worlds removed from Versailles' glitter. Yet Saint-Colombe's life is a doddle compared to other celluloid colleagues. In Hollywood follies such as *A Song to Remember* and *Song Without End*, Chopin, Liszt, Schumann and company become so entangled in affairs of the heart that it is surprising any composing gets done. Especially when the ladies have milder tongues: "Discontinue that so-called Polisher's jumble you've been playing for days," Marie Oberon's George Sand orders Cornel Wilde's Chopin in *A Song to Remember*. No wonder the poor man, at the end of



Paul Muni (left) as the old music master Professor Elsner, with the young Chopin, played by Cornel Wilde in *A Song to Remember* (Ronald Grant Collection)

the film, spits Technicolor blood onto the piano keys and expires.

If celluloid composers are directed by Ken Russell, their problems breed like rabbits. We expect rampant neuroses and tormented sex lives with Tchaikovsky and Mahler. Russell, however, can detect unrequited lust even in Sir Arnold Bax, portrayed by the director himself in a bizarre film for *The South Bank Show* last month. Russell takes the Romantic concept of art to the edge of lunacy.

Yet in doing so, he is simply echoing the popular imagination, which is always tempted to equate artist with crackpot. There is only a jump in degree, not kind, from the

heroes of Russell's musical biographies to the wholly imaginary classical composers who populated films during the 1940s.

Think of Alexander Hollenius in *Deception*, a master of modern music consumed with jealous love of Bette Davis; or Enrique Claudin in 1943's *Phantom of the Opera*, unhinged by a publisher's theft of his Lisztian piano concerto. (Claude Rains impersonated both.) And who can forget Laird Cregar's George Henry Bone, the Victorian murderer of *Hangover Square*, thundering alone across the piano keys in his "Concerto Macabre" as flames engulf the concert hall?

Since *Tous les Matins* is a

European art movie, it misses the more comical aspects of the genre. Saint-Colombe and Marais speak French, not Hollywoodese. They do not drop names. Their compositions are heard in authentic versions, not whipped into saccharine rhapsodies, top-heavy with strings and a wordless choir.

Other European directors have gone further than Corneau in the pursuit of authenticity. When Jean-Marie Straub made *The Chronicle of Anna Magdalena Bach* in 1967, he wanted no Depardieu or his equivalent as the mighty J.S. Bach. Instead he plunked the wig and ruffs on the distinguished harpsichordist Gustav Leonhardt,

renowned for the severity of his concert platform manner.

With Leonhardt and other instrumentalists in position, Straub had no need for mimicking fingers and a synchronised soundtrack; he recorded his musicians directly on the set. Yet even here, artifice crept in: the chronicle itself was a work of fiction by Straub.

Europe, too, has bred its own schmaltzy fancies about composers. The tradition derives from stage operettas. *Das Dreimäderlhaus* in 1916 spun a sentimental vision of old Vienna, with a shy, lovelorn Schubert and happy songs galore. After this roaring success (variously adapted as *Lilac Time* and *Blossom*

Time), no composer of pretty tunes was safe.

Johann Strauss's waltzes were filmed for *Waltzes from Vienna*, once filmed by Alfred Hitchcock. Grieg's melodies and love life were pumped into *Song of Norway*, famously filmed with Cinerama fords and much prancing dancing.

Among all these moonstruck or demonic composers, gabbling in languages not their own, *Tous les Matins du Monde* steers a middle course. A sensible story is sensibly told, but ample room is left for the arcane music to cast its spell. Music lovers have much to be grateful for. *Tous les Matins du Monde* (12) opens in London on Friday

David Sinclair explains why the Town & Country Club in London is threatened with closure

London may lose two of its favourites

Mystery surrounds the imminent closure of two of London's best-known rock music venues. The 1,800-capacity Town & Country in Kentish Town — recent host to acts including Keith Richards, Lionel Richie and David Bowie — along with its smaller sister, the T&C2 in Islington, will both close on March 24. That is when the current lease expires. Folgate Estates, owner of the sites of both venues, has informed the clubs' leaseholders, Mick Whelan, that renewal is not an option.

The pitfalls of running a rock venue are many and varied. When one closes, it is usually obvious why. Whether it be in failing to head off opposition from residents' groups — leading to the withdrawal of an entertainment licence by the local authority — or not attracting the right acts to guarantee sufficient box-office returns, bad management is often to blame.

This is not the Town & Country's first crisis as a rock music venue. In 1990, when the lease was last up for

renewal, Folgate was keen to turn the venue into offices. It was refused permission by Camden Council which declared the property, built in 1934, to be a Grade 2 listed building. And only last year, the Town & Country was the target of a vociferous campaign mounted by local residents to have its licence curtailed. The dispute was resolved with a compromise arrangement hammered out in the Knightsbridge Crown Court, since when complaints from residents have apparently not been a problem.

Recently voted best venue in Britain for the third year running by *New Musical Express* readers, the Town & Country is virtually unrivalled, certainly when compared to other halls of a similar size in London. There is a tube station close by and reasonable parking in surrounding streets.

The door staff are tolerably well-mannered, unlike the simian security men who furnish such a hostile reception at other well-known London venues. And once inside, there is

freedom to roam, unlike the numbered seating at Hammersmith Apollo.

Town & Country manager Ollie Smith and booker Alan Robinson are unabashed about operating a policy which excludes bands that attract the "wrong" sort of following. One group was not re-booked when used syringes were found in the toilets after the gig.

Appearances by a certain sort of rap act have been curtailed after the fans of one such group arrived determined to "steal" their way in through the back doors rather than pay for a ticket. And the riotous Los Angeles-based band Fishbone were deemed not welcome after a member of the group hurled a trombone into the crowd so hard that it almost reached the bar.

So, a well-ordered venue, employing more than 30 staff, turning a healthy profit (its bar is said to be the largest outlet in Britain for Scottish & Newcastle Breweries), contributing to the local economy and apparently paying its rent on time is to be closed. Why?

Folgate has declined to

make any comment. The company is the property management wing of Murphy's, the organisation better known for digging up London's roads on behalf of the public utilities. It is overseen by John Murphy, an octogenarian thought to be a key figure in the informal network of expatriate Irish businessmen sometimes referred to as the London "Murphias".

The other side in the Town & Country affair also has strong Irish roots. Originally a single-screen cinema, the venue became an Irish Dance Hall in 1971 and only started to feature a broad range of contemporary rock acts in 1985 under the guidance of leaseholder Mick Whelan, another figure of considerable influence within the London Irish community.

Although rock venues under threat of closure are always quick to cry wolf in their efforts to mobilise popular support, on this occasion there really does seem little chance of a reprieve. Ollie Smith, who will retain the rights to the club's name, is looking for new sites,

but time is running out. The Roundhouse at Chalk Farm, recently acquired by a leisure firm, may be one possibility.

It will be a sad day for many fans, not least this critic, if the Town & Country does close. In these recessionary times it seems ironic that such a flourishing concern should be choked in its prime.



Rolling Stone Keith Richards, who recently played at the Town & Country Club with the X-Pensive Winos, the band who provide backing for his solo career

Take a trip to theatreland

THIS week The Theatre Club offers two very special weekend breaks and the chance to meet one of the most popular stars in the West End.

LONDON

Meet Phillip Schofield and see *Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, at the London Palladium, Monday, January 25.

Following the performance members will have the opportunity, over a glass of wine, to meet Phillip Schofield, star of *Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. Tickets for this evening are limited. Tickets are £27.50 which includes a top price seat and a glass of wine. Tel: 071-413 1412.

Visit the January Sales and enjoy an evening at the theatre, January 8-10.

A special weekend for members to visit the January sales and enjoy an evening at the theatre. Staying at the four-star Marlborough Hotel in the West End, the weekend starts with a three-course dinner at the hotel. On Saturday you can shop till you drop knowing that at the end of the day your hotel is just a few minutes away. After freshening up at the hotel the choice of show is

THE TIMES THEATRE CLUB

yours. We've arranged tickets for *Les Misérables*, *Cats*, *Five Guys Named Moe* and *Kiss of the Spider Woman*. If you want tickets for another show let us know when you book your weekend (subject to availability). The complete package including dinner on Friday evening, two nights bed and breakfast and top priced tickets for the show of your choice is £99 per person, based on two people sharing a room. Tel: 061-428 0008.

SCARBOROUGH

Meet Alan Ayckbourn and enjoy a weekend of his comedy at the Stephen Joseph Theatre in the Round, Scarborough, May 28-30. Alan Ayckbourn, one of the most prolific and successful playwrights, has presented nearly all his plays in a small theatre in Scarborough, where he is artistic director. Now one of his most popular works, *The*

Norman Conquests, is returning to Scarborough 20 years after it was first produced there. The production went on to the Greenwich Theatre and the Globe Theatre on Shaftesbury Avenue and starred Penelope Keith, Felicity Kendal and Michael Gambon. *The Norman Conquests* comprises three interlinked plays, *Living Together*, *Table Manners* and *Round and Round the Garden*, each of which looks at the same sequence of events over one weekend from a different perspective. We've arranged a special weekend in Scarborough to see all three plays and to meet the author. The cost is £158, which includes two nights dinner, bed and breakfast at the Crown Hotel and top price tickets for all three plays on Friday evening, Saturday afternoon and evening. Tel: 071-240 1690.

TO JOIN

If you haven't yet joined The Theatre Club, don't delay. Membership costs just £12.50. To join send a cheque for £12.50, made payable to The Theatre Club, together with your name, address and telephone number to: The Theatre Club, PO Box 3, Owen Road, Diss, Norfolk. IP22 3HH. For more information telephone 071-387 9673.

Glover hands over before she begins

JANE GLOVER's term as artistic director of the Buxton Festival has ended before it ever properly began. The conductor and BBC governor was appointed this summer on a one-year contract to take charge of next July's festival in the Derbyshire spa town. But last week the festival chairman, Bob Huddie, announced that Glover had resigned.

At the time of her appointment, Glover made it clear that she would not continue if her artistic plans could not be achieved. "I am desperately sad that things have not worked out," she said last week. Huddie also announced that Buxton had received a grant of £195,000 from the Foundation for Sport and the Arts towards next year's event.

CARDIFF is paying homage to one of its most famous sons next month. The centenary of the birth of Ivor Novello is being marked by an exhibition at the St David's Hall of manuscripts, photographs, programmes and memorabilia connected with the

ARTS BRIEFING

composer of light music.

The material, much of it never seen before in public, has been acquired over the years by Lloyds Bank, which has been keeping the home fires burning in the former Novello family residence in Cathedral Road, Cardiff. Meanwhile, on the actual anniversary evening, January 15, Sian Phillips will host a gala concert of the master's work with the BBC Welsh Symphony Orchestra.

Avril jumps ships

BBC Television's new head of music programmes is to be Avril MacRory, the present commissioning editor for music at Channel 4. She takes up the post early in the new year, replacing Dennis Marks who is going to English National Opera as general director. MacRory has been at



Ivor Novello at work: Cardiff will pay homage to its famous songwriting son on the centenary of his birth

Channel 4 since 1988; previously she was with the Irish broadcasting station RTE for nine years.

Last chance...

ARNOLD RIDLEY's *Ghost Train* shows its age, a pre-Wodehousean period when heroes said "dammit, sir, haven't you any sense of decency?" and villains were

"Rupert D'Aivarez of Barcelona and Otto Schmaz of Hamburg". But Bill Oddie, a troglodyte station-master forever mumbling "baint nothing nowhere nothing round here", is good fun, and the spook-puffer itself provides a good melodramatic climax as it screeches past the platform. Last performance at the Lyric, Hammersmith (081-741 2311) is on Saturday.

BEST MUSICAL
SHERIDAN
OSCAR AWARD 1992

"A TRIUMPH...
DEEPLY MOVING"
MICHAEL COWENY,
THE OBSERVER

KISS
OF THE SPIDER
WOMAN
THE MUSICAL



"A MUSICAL HIT
FOR LONDON
...a hypnotic anthem
to revolution,
sexual freedom
and old movies."
— TIME MAGAZINE

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TELEVISION REVIEW: Lynne Truss on a jolly silly programme about Enid Blyton

Graphic tale with no obvious point

WHEN Enid Blyton was a little girl, she had a horrid Mummy. This Mummy was not only plain of feature, but of apparel and faintly working-class (poor Enid!) but had a manner of speaking which made her sound just like a villainous adult character in a badly imagined children's book. One day, when she had cruelly disposed of Chippy, Enid's beloved pet kitten, Mummy bellowed, "I've enough to do keeping this house clean and tidy without having my work undone by your filthy stray." Mummy's head was in the fireplace at the time, incidentally. She was probably blacking the grate. It's the sort of thing nasty Mummies in bad books often find themselves doing.

Saturday night's *Bookmarked: Sunny Stories* (BBC2) clearly wanted to say something jolly clever about Enid Blyton's fictional blandness, and to demonstrate how the author shut out all nastiness (such as Mummy) by choosing to inhabit a personal fairy world thickly coded with nice things that ended in exclamation marks. But unfortunately (Oh dear!) it chose some jolly uninteresting devices with which to do it. First, you see, we had all the action (the talking heads as well as the dramatised bits) taking place against false, bright computer-generated settings, and accompanied by larky Miss Marple-type musical themes. And second, we had these really awful scenes (see the Curse of the Mummy, above) carefully written to sound like things that never happened!

Thus, when Enid's first husband decided to leave her (nobody can

forgive his wife for kissing another man in a computer-generated flat in town), he walked to the station along a computer-generated road, posed in a reflective attitude of farewell, and then disappeared on a little toy train, which hurtled off into the night with a furious rat-tat-tat-tat. Look, there he goes! Such fun. (If this is sophisticated irony, by the way, I am Claudine at St Clare's.)

It was a shame about all this graphics hocus-pocus, because it detracted from Maureen Lipman's good performance as the obsessional storyteller, and didn't give you time to think. Here was a writer of phenomenal output (more than 700 books), who had a fantastic knack of telling stories, straight off, with no perceptible intervention of the little grey cells. Surely it would have been worth a couple of minutes' consideration to establish whether this made her a genius. *Tap-tap-tap* she went, without pause, in a single day producing ten thousand words (not all of them different, of course). Truman Capote once remarked of a fellow American writer, "That's not writing, it's typing." Enid Blyton, interestingly, would not have seen any distinction.

The questions you might have expected the programme to answer hardly got a look in. Was Enid Blyton's writing really racist? Or sexist? How bad (or good) a writer was she? At one point, admittedly, Maureen Lipman was called to the dock with Noddy, and cross-examined about gollies by a toy fox, but such whimsy was honestly so glibly it is better to draw a veil. What one learned from this programme was



Cross-examined about gollies: Lipman in the dock with Noddy

that Blyton kept up a facade of happiness, and lied to herself. Of her daughters, one was happy, the other miserable. But on the famous literary accusations — that her stuff is superficial and doesn't stretch the mind: that

it condescendingly expresses a smug middle-class culture — well, this programme was hardly in a position to throw stones, was it children? And as for its own use of exclamation marks — Well!

DANCE: Nadine Meisner reviews two casts in this year's Christmas offering from English National Ballet

Exotic guests enliven a traditional festive feast

OVER recent years we have seen many unfamiliar names collected into the higher ranks of English National Ballet: unfamiliar names that only sometimes become familiar. They tend to disappear again, without having made much impact.

One familiar name, though, is Ben Stevenson, the choreographer responsible for three full-length productions in London City Ballet and ENB's current repertoire. LCB is performing his *Romeo and Juliet* at Sadler's Wells. ENB has *Chimera* and have now launched their second Christmas of his *Nutcracker* at the Festival Hall. With it comes another roster of new and mysterious international recruits: dancers from Spain (Trinidad Vives); Croatia (Irena Paskarić); and Hungary (Tamas Solymosi).

In this *Nutcracker*, Drosselmeyer appears less prominent, but performs some neat conjuring tricks. The party guests are scrupulously portrayed, each performer given a distinct identity to enact (or in this case overact) jokes

bristled from every corner: characters keep falling over; soldier-mice arrive with a stretcher to carry off one of their wounded; pastry cooks with cherubs' wings inhabit the Kingdom of Sweets, a roccoco heaven for the young at heart and sweet of tooth.

This is also the *Nutcracker* where the Prince has three ladies to look after: young Clara, who dreams the baller's fantasy; the Sugar Plum Fairy; and a Snow Queen who also gets to dance a pas de deux with him. In the last role, Josephine Jewkes, a long-established dancer in the company, looked capable but stern on Tuesday. Trinidad Vives, on Wednesday, appeared more alluring. She has a generous smile and firm

technique, judiciously presented in the rather old-fashioned manner that eschews the vertiginous extensions and conceals the effort being made rather than displaying it.

Vives also danced the Sugar Plum Fairy in the Tuesday cast; while on Wednesday it was Irena Paskarić who took that role. Paskarić presented a lavishly lit style with many musical emphases of the head and arms that "sang". This beamed out grace, but equally a certain twyness, not helped by the tara- and dowdy chignon designated for the role.

Tamas Solymosi, who played her Prince, has a familiar surname. His brother is Zoltan, the Royal Ballet's

dashing romantic lead. They do not, however, share the same physique: where Zoltan is tall with bulk, Tamas's tallness is coupled with long, slim limbs. Standing in careful postures with refined flourishes, he suggested the elegant *dansur noble*: a shame that when he started dancing he should reveal a bit-and-miss technique with untidy finishes. But he showed an impressive strength and sophistication as a partner. Young Christopher Fowmey, who exhibited even less control in the Prince's solos on Tuesday, still has to acquire those partnering skills.

This season brings a different Arabian number: a cumbersome entwining duet that certainly contains more steps than the previous version; but choreography has never been Stevenson's forte. Nevertheless, take your children to see the show. They will enjoy the jokes and Desmond Heeley's cosy designs, complete with peacock glitz on the snowy landscapes, just like a traditional Christmas card.

CONCERT: Stephen Pettit joins a large audience for an impressive evening of Renaissance vocal music

Early delights attract a devoted following

A BOMB scare on the underground severely impeded my passage to the Tallis Scholars' Christmas concert. Only because of the magnificent efforts of a nippy taxi-driver called Graham (due acknowledged was promised him was I able to hear the Sanctus, Benedictus and Agnus Dei of Thomas Tallis's lovely seven-voice *Missa Puer natus est nobis*, albeit only via the speakers outside the hall. This great, euphonous work, only relatively recently rescued from its fragmented state, though still with its *Credo* missing, is thought to have been performed in the old St Paul's Cathedral on Advent Sunday in 1554, to celebrate the union of Mary Tudor and Philip of Spain and the absorption of England by Cardinal Pole. The effect here seemed suitably ceremonial and atmospheric, the blend of voices as lovely as ever.

Come the interval and one thing became plain as the people poured out: the Tallis Scholars have successfully

cultivated an impressive, following. Who could have imagined ten years ago that a group specialising in such ostensibly arcane music would have filled this hall? They are proof that the surest way to gather a public is to work solidly with art of the highest quality. There are no gimmicks; a lesson for others in different fields.

Some, however, have come to balk at the somewhat monochromatic sound of such choirs, and in this fiercely dry acoustic one could sympathise with such a view. But what the Tallis Scholars' director, Peter Phillips, aims at is a highly refined, chamber music-

like approach, heard at its best here in Josquin's starkly exquisite four-voice Ave Maria, the first of three settings we heard of this text, which together

charted a swift, neat passage through the Renaissance. Frequently the thin thread of a single exposed note — terrifying for the singer responsible — would hold the piece together. Philippe Verdelot's *Beata virgo Ave Maria* returned us to the lavish seven-voice texture of the Tallis mass, and of his busy Whitinsund respond, *Loquebatur variis linguis*, which had introduced the evening on a curiously unseasonal note. The finely-judged

sonorities of Verdelot's setting, spread over a wide pitch range, contributed much to its emotional power. Then the antiphonal exchanges in Victoria's double-choir Ave Maria setting (adding yet another voice-part) supplied a measure of drama to a work of supreme and devout intensity.

After this we returned to England, first to William Byrd's touching five-part *Lullaby*, given a beautifully turned reading, and then to a new reconstruction by David Skinner, made possible by the emergence recently of most of one of the two missing parts of Tallis's expansive antiphon, Ave *Dei patris filia*. This is a legacy from the extravagant late medieval flourishing represented in the music of the Eton Choirbook. Its lavish melismas, culminating in a magnificent "Amen", were relished by a group in whose blood such music naturally courses.

LONDON

CINDERELLA. The Royal Ballet's Christmas treat, based on the classic fairy-tale, with music by Prokofiev and choreography by Frederick Ashton. Including the Ugly Sisters' (paleo de rido) scene. Nara Naranashvili dances the title role tonight with Stuart Cassidy as her prince.

ROYAL OPERA HOUSE, Covent Garden, WC2 (071-404 1066/1911). Tonight, 7.30pm and 7.30pm.

TRAVELLING OPERA: Peter Knapp and his energetic touring company arrive at the South Bank with their lively versions of *La Bohème* (set in 1830s Paris) and *Don Pasquale* (with the hero as a modern Tuscan bread maker).

Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, London SE1 (071-404 8807). Tonight (Don Pasquale), 7.30pm.

VISUALISING MUSIC: WRITERS: The theme of this small show (13 works in total) is the way artists from the mid-18th century up to today have used the male body in art. The choice includes: Matisse, Picasso, Pollock and Bacon.

21st Gallery, Millbank, SW1 (071-421 1313). Mon-Sat, 10am-6pm, Sun, 2-5.30pm, and June 6 closed New Year's day.

ANNIE GET YOUR GUN: Irving Berlin's pre-1930s musical is no model for a New Year's Eve party but the songs are simply scintillating.

Princes of Wales, Coventry Street, W1 (071-404 8867). Tues-Sat, 7.30pm, and Thurs, Sat, Sun, 10pm (closed today).

ASSASSINS: Sondheim's sharp and successful musical explores the impulse that drives no-hopes to kill American Presidents.

Dorchester Warehouse, Earlsfield Road, WC2 (071-404 1150). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, and Thurs, Sat, Sun, 10pm (closed New Year's day).

BARNUM: Enjoyable Christmas treat, with Paul Nicholas wailing the high wire. Bouncy numbers by Cy Coleman and Michael Stewart.

Dorchester, Tottenham Court Road, W1 (071-404 8868). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, and Wed and Sat, 3pm, 140mins.

BILLY LIAR: The Waterhouse/Hall success of 1980 exposed as unbalanced and preposterous.

National Theatre (Cottesloe), South Bank, SE1 (071-404 2282). Today, 7.30pm, tomorrow, 2.30pm and 7.30pm, 140mins.

CAROUSEL: Joanna Riding and Michael Hayden star in a triumphant revival of the Rodgers & Hammerstein musical.

National (Lyttelton), South Bank, SE1 (071-404 2282). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, and Thurs, Sat, Sun, 10pm.

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS: Lucie Arnott's subtly funny production, with award-winning Desmond Barrie playing both parts.

Barbican, Silk Street, EC2 (071-404 8891). Today-Sat, 7.15pm, Wed, Sat, 3pm, 140mins.

THE CURT OF THE GORGON: Peter Shaffer's latest: bloodthirsty revenge versus lovelessness on a modern Greek island. Deep issues, dry treatment.

Thrust, Old Dench Road, SE1 (071-404 8891). Today, tomorrow, 7.15pm, 160mins.

HAY FEVER: Very funny performance in a comedy of a mad scientist.

Albany, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (071-404 8891). Mon-Sat, 8pm, and Thurs, Sat, Sun, 10pm.

IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY: Larne in the hospital common room; music

TODAY'S EVENTS

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Heather Ashton

GEORGE MELLY: The singer, author and authority on modern art appears with John Chilton's Festivities.

Roscoe Scott, 47 Firth Street, W1 (071-439 0747). Tonight, Jan 2, 9.30pm.

GLEN MILLER CHRISTMAS: The orchestra under John Wilson performs Glenn Miller favourites including *In the Mood*, *Little Brown Jug* and *Chattanooga Choo Choo*.

Coventry, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Quarry Hill Mount, (0532 442111). Today, tomorrow, 3pm, 7pm, Various at 1.45pm, 3pm and 7pm until Jan 6.

LIVERPOOL: The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra with John Buckley, with a selection of Viennese music including Strauss's *Emperor Waltz* and *The Blue Danube*.

Philharmonie Hall, Hope Street, (051-708 3763). Tonight, 7.30pm.

RADIO TIMES: Tony Slattery in a Sun Up down Memory Lane, set in wartime Broadcasting House, bustling with sprightly Noel Gay numbers.

Casualty, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (071-494 5040). Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, Sat, 8pm, and Thurs, 2.30pm, Sat, 4.30pm, 150mins.

THREE SIDES ALIGHTING ON A FIELD: Harriet Walter perfect again in a revival of the subtle, comic, date-of-the-moment play, set in a world of shifting values and plummeting air-pressures.

Royal Court, Sloane Square, SW1 (071-730 1749). Mon-Sat, 8pm, and Thurs, 2.30pm, 100mins.

TRAVELS WITH MY AUNT: Simon Cadell, John Wells, Richard Kane, Christopher Goss play all 26 parts in a hilarious farce.

Arts Theatre (071-438 2135). Today-Sat, 7.30pm, and Thurs, 2.30pm, 100mins.

LONG RUNNERS: Blood Brothers (071-404 8891).

Arts Theatre (071-438 2135). Today-Sat, 7.30pm, and Thurs, 2.30pm, 100mins.

LOST IN YONKERS: Terefe performance by Rosemary Harris in a Neil Simon comedy more weighty than usual.

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THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingdon's assessment of theatre showing in London

outaged; doctors humored. Play

Playhouse, Northumberland Avenue, WC2 (071-404 4401). Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 8.30pm, and Thurs, 3pm, 100mins.

AN IDEAL HUSBAND: Anna Cartwright, Hannah Gordon and Martin Shaw in Wilde's "insider director" melodrama.

Globe, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (071-404 5008). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, and Thurs, 3pm, Sat, 4pm, 100mins.

LOSS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN: Tremendously glossy production of the Rance & Rance musical. It concerns the

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MISSY: Sharon Gless and Bill Paterson in an American grand guignol; hopeless characterisation for Stephen

Arts Theatre (071-438 2135). Today-Sat, 7.30pm, and Thurs, 2.30pm, 100mins.

OUR SON'S: Peter O'Toole in a Neil Simon comedy more weighty than usual.

Arts Theatre (071-438 2135). Today-Sat, 7.30pm, and Thurs, 2.30pm, 100mins.

THE CURT OF THE GORGON: Peter Shaffer's latest: bloodthirsty revenge versus lovelessness on a modern Greek island.

Thrust, Old Dench Road, SE1 (071-404 8891). Today, tomorrow, 7.15pm, 160mins.

HAY FEVER: Very funny performance in a comedy of a mad scientist.

Albany, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (071-404 8891). Mon-Sat, 8pm, and Thurs, Sat, Sun, 10pm.

IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY: Larne in the hospital common room; music

Barbican, Silk Street, EC2 (071-404 8891). Today-Sat, 7.15pm, Wed, Sat, 3pm, 140mins.

THE CURT OF THE GORGON: Peter Shaffer's latest: bloodthirsty revenge versus lovelessness on a modern Greek island.

Thrust, Old Dench Road, SE1 (071-404 8891). Today, tomorrow, 7.15pm, 160mins.

HAY FEVER: Very funny performance in a comedy of a mad scientist.

Albany, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (071-404 8891). Mon-Sat, 8pm, and Thurs, Sat, Sun, 10pm.

Hidden perks of holding company shares

SOME shareholders make it a matter of honour to turn up at an annual meeting for the feast and drink that follows. Since, these days, they are more likely to be greeted with coffee and biscuits than poached salmon, a new strategy is called for.

A surprising number of listed companies offer discounts and perks to shareholders. Even one share in Iceland Frozen Foods buys £1 off the cost of an average shopping basket. Anyone with 200 shares in Thornions gets £1 off a box of chocolates — a fiver if you spend more than £20 — and shares in Merrydown Wine will buy a 20 per cent discount on a case of vintage cider or country wine.

Then again, they might choke on their food and drink. Poor summer chocolate sales sent Thornions' shares sliding from about 200p in March, although they are now back at 188p. Merrydown's shares fell 43p to 255p in September, on fears about competition from cheaper cider brands. The shares are now at 260p. Only Iceland seems to be gunning ahead. The shares stood at 505p in August and had risen to 625p by Christmas.

Sketchily, the dry cleaning and textile rental group, gives 25 per cent discounts for most cleaning services to holders of 1,000 shares. The shares have seen-sawed since the company was brought back from the brink of collapse two years ago and are hovering near 101p.

Then there are the blue chips. Even one share in the Savoy group buys 10 per cent off accommodation at Claridge's, The Berkeley, The Lygon Arms, The Lancaster in Paris, and The Savoy, where single rooms start at £158. British Airways gives a 10 per cent discount on published fares or 5 per cent off BA holidays to holders of 200 shares.

Five hundred shares in Austin Reed buy 15 per cent off clothing, shoes and sporting goods. Asprey, the Bond Street jeweller, offers a 15 per cent discount on most cash buys by Asprey Card — with a slight catch. Devotees must hold 5,062 shares, currently valued at 285p, setting them back about £1,440.

The list goes on. Buy 1,000 shares in Barratt Developments (cost: £970) and the company will knock £500 off every £25,000 on the price of a new or part-exchanged house. Buy 20 shares in the unquoted North Norfolk Railway and receive two second class journeys on the company's five-mile line between Sheringham and Holt in Norfolk.

Trafalgar House offers 15 per cent off selected cruises on the QE2 to holders of 500 shares — current value: £420. Ladbroke Group offers 10 per cent off standard room rates and meals and drinks at Hilton International hotels. Lomro offers a generous 30 per cent discount on accommodation at the Merville Beach Hotel, Mauritius, reducing the price of a superior single room from £120 to £84. Shareholders are also entitled to 25 per cent on rooms at Metropole hotels in the UK. Eligibility requires 100 shares, currently valued at £770.

One of the most popular perks of all is unlikely to survive the new year. Shareholders of Ranks Hovis McDougall, the milling, baking and groceries group, have for years been turning up at the annual meeting for their sample packs of Mr Kipling cakes and other goodies. Greg Hinchings, of Tomkins, which is digesting RHM after its successful takeover bid, will have no time for such frivolity.

Seymour Pierce Butterfield, 24 Chiswell Street, London EC1Y 4TY, publishes its 1993 guide to shareholder discounts next month, price £5.

JON ASHWORTH

HIDING THE ROLLER-COASTER MARKET

Glimmers in the gloom of '92

The departing year has had its ups and downs for investors.

Michael Clark monitors them

In the run-up to Black Wednesday last September, and the subsequent devaluation of the pound, it seemed that there would be precious few winners on the London stock market in 1992.

The equity market had been in decline throughout the summer after the brief flurry that marked the Conservative's general election victory. It was clear from late May that the economists had been wrong and that the economy was still in deep recession.

Analysts were gloomy for much of the year, downgrading profit estimates for all the major companies as the recession continued to take a heavy toll.

Shrewd investors should have followed the old adage to buy at the bottom and sell at the top. But it seemed that, for much of 1992, few investors had spare money to invest in the equity market. Turnover for much of the year was depressingly low and it was almost inevitable that another round of job losses would follow.

Dividend payments were also no longer taken for granted and, at one stage, it was estimated that one in ten of the top 250 companies was contemplating a cut in payments to shareholders.

Some brokers were forecasting a drop in the FT-SE 100 index to about 2,200. As it was, the index bottomed out at 2,281 in August, before recovering rapidly before Black Wednesday to close on Christmas eve on a high note at 2,827, a rise on the year of 13.5 per cent.

Despite the difficulties of 1992, there were still a few healthy gains and investors were left in no doubt about the outright winners. One was Tanjong — Who did I hear you say? — which soared 305 per cent to 405p.

Tanjong, a former tin dredger, acquired Pan Malaysian Pools, the lottery company, in 1991, and also manages the National Stud Farm.

However, its victory is hollow. The few shares available have been dealt on a matched bargain basis since April. Investors had more of an opportunity to make a killing in second-placed TVS Entertainment, despite the fact the company loses its independent television broadcasting franchise this week.

The past few years have been a tale of woe for TVS shareholders following its acquisition of MTM, the American production company, which subsequently made heavy losses.

It looked as if their salvation was at hand, however, in the shape of the Rev Pat Robertson, the television evangelist, and his company, International Television Entertainment, which decided to make an offer of 23p a share for TVS, lifting the price 328 per cent to 30p.

Unfortunately, many shareholders were already sitting on a substantial trading loss, having seen the share price

touch more than 400p in 1987.

The younger investor also had winners in Bluebird Toys and rival Sleepy Kids, climbing 294 per cent and 241 per cent respectively.

Bluebird pleased the market by returning to the black with best-selling products such as the Big Red Fun Bus and Sleepy Kids scored a coup by obtaining the rights to Bugdie the Helicopter, a character created by the Duchess of York.

There was also good news for the late, lamented "young, upwardly mobile" as Filofax made a return to the black, helped by the company's new management team. The shares responded with a leap of 192 per cent to 73p.

The stores sector was bought for its recovery potential, having been one of the first affected by recession. Many investors still take the view that the economic recovery will be led by a revival of consumer spending. As a result, Next showed the first signs of promise after the departure of George Davis, the chairman and founder, while new management teams are also making their mark at Burton and Storehouse.

News International, publisher of The Times, enjoyed a 172 per cent rise.

HSBC Holdings, which owns the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, appears to have flourished after its bid for Midland Bank this year.

In contrast, Lasso has suffered since the Ultramar takeover because of high debts, low oil prices and the need to make disposals. Lasso did, however, succeed in making more than \$1.5 billion of disposal during the year.

But it was the recession that exacted the heaviest toll on profits and share prices.

One of the worst affected was British Aerospace, where the share price slumped 54 per cent.

British Aerospace's troubles had crystallised at the end of 1991, with the group asking shareholders to stump up £432 million as part of a rescue package that was quickly followed by a profits warning and the departure of Professor Sir Roland Smith as chairman.

City fund managers gave the issue a wide berth as the share price went into freefall. Not surprisingly, most of the issue was left in the hands of the underwriters. But the group's difficulties did not end there.

The share price continued to lose ground as British Aerospace plunged into the red, hitting an all-time low of 100p. The end of the cold war saw western governments cutting back on defence spending.

Civilian airlines were going bust, hit hard by the worldwide economic slump that forced North West Airlines to cancel a major contract for the European Airbus.

Rover is the nearest thing to a success story for British Aerospace, but, like all car



Message of hope: the Rev Pat Robertson's bid boosted TVS Entertainment shares

manufacturers, it has found the going tough.

Thousands of jobs have been shed and more are likely to go. BAE, no doubt, will be hoping for a better 1993. The electronics team at Henderson Crosthwaite, the stockbroker, has tipped it as its share of the year.

Another company subject to the chill winds of recession was Arjo Wiggins Appleton, the Anglo-French paper group. UBS Phillips & Drew, its stockbroker, cut its profit forecast at least three times during 1992.

In May, shareholders had been rocked by the sudden departure of Stephen Walls, the chief executive, who had handled the demerger of the business from BAT Industries in 1990, and who engineered the subsequent merger with Arjomari-Prixoux, of France.

The group's fortunes worsened along with the decline in the European economy. Price erosion and over-capacity in its coated and carbonless paper operations were behind a 27 per cent drop in interim pre-tax profits announced in September along with a warning that it was difficult to see any return in conditions during the next 18 months.

But what really ranked with the institutions was the decision to cut the dividend 20 per cent, despite the fact that a maintained dividend would have been more than twice covered.

Queens Most Houses, the fast growing hotel chain, is another casualty of recession. But the shares have also been staggering under the weight of the group's mounting debt level, leaving doubts about future prospects.

Boardroom rows resulting in the departure of Sam Smith, the chairman, left shareholders of Binac Industries nursing hefty losses at the year end.

Trafalgar House, the construction, property and shipping group that owns the Ritz hotel and the Cunard shipping line, will be glad to see

the back of 1992. The plunge in its share price left it vulnerable to takeover and Hongkong Land Holdings took full advantage to buy a near-15 per cent stake in the group. Trafalgar remains vulnerable and wants to make disposals to reduce debts.

BET, the industrial services group, grew strong by snapping up smaller companies during the boom. But it all turned sour during the slump, with profits falling sharply. In the past year, the group has disposed of about 18 businesses and is still looking for buyers for a further six.

The recession, low metal prices and weak African currencies all combined to take a heavy toll of Tiny Rowland's Lomro, which has ended

1992 on another controversial note.

Meanwhile, profits at Lomro are likely to fall sharply this year, with analysts estimating a pre-tax figure of £80 million, compared with £207 million last time. Borrowings have risen to nearly £1 billion.

Earlier this month, Mr Rowland signalled that he may be ready to relinquish control of the group with the sale of half his 15 per cent holding to Dieter Bock, the German businessman. The shares were sold at a substantial premium to the ruling market price.

No doubt, the deal will have ranked with some institutions. But, after all, it is the season of good will.

WINNERS AND LOSERS

Best and worst in the top 250 companies (by capitalisation)

RISERS	Price at 1/1/92	Price at 22/12/92	change
News International	258p	704p	172%
Next	57p	108p	140%
Storehouse	88p	189p	114%
FD	52p	102p	96%
HSBC	243p	463p	90%
William Morrison	85p	162p	89%
Cookson Group	104p	184p	78%
Milro Focus	154p	267p	72%
Granada	182p	321p	72%
Burton Group	38p	65p	71%
FALLS			
BET	189p	83p	-56%
Queens Most	79p	34p	-56%
Lomro	185p	71p	-62%
British Aerospace	318p	147p	-54%
Hammerson A	800p	285p	-47%
Body Shop International	354p	137p	-46%
Arjo Wiggins Appleton	243p	137p	-43%
Lasso	222p	137p	-38%
Slough Estates	222p	142p	-37%
Trafalgar House	120p	70p	-36%

All-converts rises and falls on the year

RISERS	100p	405p	305%
Tanjong	7p	30p	328%
TVS Entertainment	36p	138p	294%
Bluebird Toys	84p	310p	264%
Sleepy Kids	11p	104p	250%
Brown & Jackson	11p	38p	245%
Acorn Computer	8p	29p	222%
Hambleton Telecomputer	25p	82p	213%
Huntleigh Technology	25p	73p	192%
FALLS			
MTM	243p	15p	-93%
Lightship	137p	104p	-92%
Pape Group	108p	84p	-91%
Greycoat	113p	94p	-91%
Merivale Moore	131p	13p	-90%
Binac Industries	99p	8p	-93%
High-Point	67p	97p	-98%
Young Group	285p	14p	-95%
Asprey Communications	108p	44p	-86%

Source: Datastream

Downsizers and outsiders make it a stormy year on Wall Street

Philip Robinson on 12 months

most Americans from President Bush downwards would much rather forget

In America, it was the year of the outsider: an outsider won the presidential election, outsiders began flexing their muscles in big corporate boardrooms while white and blue collar workers ended the year outside the factory gates. And there is only an outside chance that next year will be any better.

Corporate coups were rife. Out went Robert Stempel, General Motors' boss, Nicholas Nicholas, Time Warner's co-chief executive, and James Robinson III as chief executive of American Express. Out went hundreds of thousands of jobs from the giants of America adjusting to the reality of recession, and president-elect Bill Clinton, the man everyone had counted on until the final months, is about to go to the White House.

Wall Street heard some wrong numbers. GFA Group, Tony Ryan's airline leasing firm, pulled its \$1 billion share offer and the legendary Wang Laboratories filed for bankruptcy protection. Their own numbers were much more telling. Investment and trading profits surged on the back of a market that hit a peak in the summer and is likely to give much more of an eighties feel to brokers' year-end bonuses.

Despite the frantic share buying, great empires were carved up. The Canadian Reichmann brothers, whose Olympia & York Developments built more square feet than any other company, took most of year to find the right kind of numbers acceptable to their creditors but skillfully negotiated to keep their US operations out of the mire.

Berlitz and the Daily News in New York went to auction with the break-up of the late Robert Maxwell's US empire. Jaguar, Tiffany, Ramblers and Rolls-Royce were all hit by the US luxury tax, and the poor showing of art buyers forced Christie's and Sotheby's to raise commission rates 50 per cent. The fresh income will come too late to help Alfred Taubman, the hard-pressed Sotheby's chairman, who sold a third of his shares in the auction house for personal reasons, then attempted to float his shopping malls.

Michael Milken, the convicted financier, got his minimum ten-year sentence cut to two by following the Wall Street tradition of assisting with other prosecutions. Ivan Boesky, the insider dealer who informed on Milken, was fined a further \$50 million to settle civil insider dealing lawsuits while suing his estranged wife for \$1 million a year alimony.

Eighties-style big deals returned. EMI spent \$1 billion for Virgin Records, and American Telephone and Telegraph said it was prepared to write a \$3.8 billion cheque for one third of McCaw Cellular Com-

munications, the mobile telephone group, buying out BT's stake for about \$1.75 billion in the process. Insurers were blown over with the near \$17 billion cost of Hurricane Andrew, while accountants had a sharp reminder, via multi-million dollar fines, that they must count accurately in company audits.

Bankers winced as Donald Trump, the property developer they had to rescue two years ago, gained permission for the largest residential development Manhattan has yet seen. Most bankers now lend him money based on collateral rather than the handshake that was once considered sufficient by NatWest and others.

Executive suite pay cheques continued to grow — to \$75 million for Tony O'Reilly, the Heinz boss, and to almost \$200 million for Michael Eisner and Frank Wells at Walt Disney, who were both given an unpleasant dose of Euro-reality when the Paris branch of the Magic Kingdom failed to charm tourists in their expected droves.

"Downsizing" became corporate speak for "your job's just been axed" and the phrase was uttered widely at General Motors, IBM, Ford, Time Warner, Macy's and Sears Roebuck. The subsequent belt-tightening as the nation's consumer confidence sank cutting travel and holidays, sent airlines nose-diving into the red for their second year.

The biggest airline deal came apart even before it had lined up on the runway when British Airways pulled out of a \$750 million link with USAir.

For an America that has been told the start of 1992 occurred nine months after the official end of the recession, few said it felt like it. As job cut after job cut flashed across newspapers and television, many voiced the fear that America was losing its competitive and cutting edge in many industries.

To cap it all the Japanese bought something else. This time it was a blow deep into the American soul with the majority purchase by Nintendo of the Seattle Mariners baseball team. But the Americans may yet get their own back. If that investment performs as well as other Japanese purchases of American culture, they should be about 40 per cent down on their money within two years.



Nice work: Tony O'Reilly of Heinz earned \$75 million

Billion-dollar man who came in from the cold

Continued from page 28

suspended sentences in February after being found guilty of conspiracy to defraud, Christopher Stainforth, Jonathan Cohen, David Reed and Nicholas Wells had their convictions quashed in July.

The Bad... Peter Clowes, who in February began a ten-year jail sentence after being found guilty of 18 charges of theft and fraud.

...and the Unresolved. Alan Bond, who was released from an Australian prison in August after serving 91 days of a two-and-a-half-year sentence for dishonesty. Mr Bond now faces a retrial.

Best Corporate Exit. A third year of recession ensured the fiercest competition for hon-

ours in this section. Nor, for the first time, was keeping it in the family sufficient defence against the demands of increasingly desperate bankers.

as Paul Reichmann and Gerald Ronson both discovered, although both are still involved in running the companies the banks now own. But it was the public companies that saw the most dramatic departures.

Having clung to power for more than 18 months since his infamous remarks, Gerald Ramer finally resigned from Ramers in November, his path only slightly eased by £375,000 — one year's salary.

Off, too, were Tony Miller and Philip Green, from Albert Fisher and Amber Day respec-

tively, helped by rather more heavyweight compensation of £850,000 and £1.1 million each.

In terms of compensation, the £1.9 million that Sir Eric Parker and Sir Nigel Brookes share for making way at Trafalgar House will also be difficult to top.

However, for sheer all-round impact, our prize goes to Bob Horton, whose unexpected resignation from the dual roles of chairman and chief executive at BP in June wiped a cool £1.8 billion off the company's stock market value.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Mr Horton's compensation package has yet to be disclosed.

The Chris Patten Award for Reallocated Resources. First prize to Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, which spent £3 billion on buying the Midland Bank.

Runner-up is Hongkong Land, which took a 15 per cent stake in Trafalgar House in October and has since agreed a complicated option agreement that should give it more than 20 per cent in the not too distant future.

Poison Chalice. A rare self-inflicted award this year goes to Dieter Bock, the German businessman who announced plans in December to invest at least £85 million in Lomro shares — including a 6.9 per cent stake owned by Tiny Rowland.


Mr Rowland's plans suggest he may not be able to present Mr Bock with his prize for another three years. Others suspect it could be much earlier.

Runner-up prizes to the yet-to-be appointed non-executive directors at Amstrad and the yet-to-be filled chair at Brent Walker.

Poorest Bid Defence. To the board of Ranks Hovis McDougall, which took a fortnight to decide that its response to Hanson's £780 million bid would be to demerge into three parts. Two weeks later, the same board decided that its future now lay with selling the whole company to Tomkins, which was offering £925 million.

Nigel Lawson Award for Eighties Nostalgia. The stock market got the jitters over new issues but there was still eighties-style money to be made by those who got their buyout timing right and placings underwritten. Our prize is shared by the management of Taunton Cider, Anglian Windows, MFI and the Daily Telegraph.

A special consolation prize goes to the management of Parker Pens, who were looking forward to sharing more than £28 million this Christmas, until Michael Heseltine referred Gillette's £285 million bid to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. The new year can only be better.





GOVERNO DE SÃO PAULO
CONSTRUINDO UM FUTURO MELHOR

FIFTH AMENDMENT TO THE INVITATION TO BID 8880/92

ELECTROMECHANICAL EQUIPMENT INTENDED FOR CANOAS I AND CANOAS II POWER PLANTS

The date for receipt of documentation and proposals is postponed to January 29, 1993, at same place and time.

Administrative Directorate
Open Company
C.G.C. 60.933.603/0001-78

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CHANNEL 4

- 6.00 *Carsons* (21954)
- 7.00 *The Big Breakfast* presented by Chris Evans and Gaby Roslin (89383)
- 9.00 *You Bet Your Life*. Game show hosted by Bill Cosby (s) (6307461)
- 9.25 *Laurel and Hardy* (5970383) 9.30 *Sesame Street* (84041)
- 10.30 *Channel 4 Racing: The Morning Line*. Daily horse racing (82652)
- 11.00 *Pro-Celebrity Game Show*. Isale Inven and Sam Torrance are joined by Christopher Law and John Parrott at the Dromoland Castle Hotel course in Ireland. Introduced by Tony Jacklin (88864)
- 12.00 *Famous Faces, Famous Places*. Quiz game presented by William G. Stewart (s) (94664)
- 12.30 *Channel 4 Racing* from Kempton Park and Leopardstown. Brought Scott introduce live coverage of the 12.45, 1.15, 1.45, 2.20 and 2.50 races from Kempton Park and the 2.40 from Leopardstown (40087439)
- 3.15 *A Raisin in the Sun* (1961). The Sidney Poitier season continues with this screen version of Lorraine Hansberry's prize-winning Broadway play about a poor black family living in a Chicago tenement and the effect a \$10,000 insurance pay-out has on their lives. With Claudia McNeil, Ruby Dee and Diana Sands. Directed by Daniel Petrie. (Teletext) (49350503)
- 5.35 *The Lovebirds*. Animation from Hungary, by Jozsef Nepp (897206)
- 5.55 *News summary* and weather (479190)
- 6.00 *Roseanne*. Widescreen comedy starring Roseanne Arnold and John Goodman (r) (Teletext) (393)
- 6.30 *The Wonder Years*. Comedy about growing up in 1960s America (r) (646)
- 7.00 *Choice Island*
 - *CHOICE*: The respectable classes snifted and the *New York Times* called it "Sodom by the sea" but from the late 18th century to the 1960s *Choice Island* provided New Yorkers, particularly the poorer ones, with a flamboyant escape into a fantasy world. This five-mile long spit of land at the foot of Brooklyn may have attracted sailors, pickpockets and swindlers, as well as shady businessmen trying to make a quick fortune. But the vast amusement park with their rollercoasters, simulated disasters and other novelties offered much innocuous pleasure. This documentary is from the team which made the impressive BBC2 series *The American* and was also concentrates on *Choice Island's* pre-1914 heyday, skilfully evoking the period with archive footage, still photographs and first-hand memories (5119)
- 8.00 *Brookside*. Soap set in suburban Merseyside. (Teletext) (s) (6751)
- 8.30 *Desmond's*. Gentle comedy series set in a Peckham, south London, barber's. (Teletext) (s) (5898)
- 9.00 *An Angel at My Table*. This is an award-winning three-part film biography of the New Zealand writer Janet Frame. to be shown on consecutive nights. (Teletext) (4003)
- 10.00 *This is GARTH BROOKS*. A showcase for the Grammy Award-winning country and western singer (s) (7190)



All at sea: Philip Middlemiss, Caroline Milmo (7.30pm)



Railroaded: Sidney Poitier and John Cassavetes (\$1.00pm)

11.00 Film: Edge of the City (1957, b/w) starring Sidney Poitier and John Cassavetes. A powerful drama about a sullen and neurotic army deserter who is befriended by a New York railroad freight loader. Martin Ritt's first film as director (932408)

12.35am Film: Terror of Mechagoddzilla. (1975). Another in the Japanese-made Godzilla series. Directed by Inoshiro Honda. English dialogue (5885610). Ends at 2.05

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Ice Hockey (9111)

LIFESTYLE

10.00:00 The Spiral Zone (98448) 10.30 The Race Lightning Show (97868) 10.30 Gloss (10084) 11.00 The River Riders Show (98222) 12.10:00 Jai Jai Rachel (9712138) 1.10 Lunchbox (98263461) 1.40 Sea-4-Seasons (94000119) 2.10 I Can Jump Jumps (9227138) 3.00 The New Yearline Game (9259) 3.30 The Mothers+Law (9514) 4.00 Dick Van Dyke Show (4622) 4.30 The Dick Van Dyke Show (98263461) 5.00 Confrontation (7041) 5.30 Sea-4-Seasons (98458) 6.00 Jai Jai Rachel (94001) 7.00 Sea-4-Seasons (983448) 8.30 3.00:00 Top Five (95356)

UK GOLD

6.00:00 Rainbow (1031057) 6.15 Chorton

Sons and Daughters (2349926) 9.30 East-Enders (244826) 9.30 The Bill (2329838) 9.30 The Detectives of Dicks Street (9824751) 10.30 The Detectives (98263461) 11.30 Terry and June (2329838) 12.30 Sons and Daughters (2349926) 12.30:00 Neighbours (6741149) 1.00 The Bill (241654) 1.30 The Bill (2329838) 2.30:00 George and Mildred (1341981) 3.30:00 All-Here (9816157) 3.30:00 News (98263461) 4.00:00 Delerious (the Film) (9824048) 4.30:00 Dragnet Junior High (98263461) 5.00:00 Neighbours (2341111) 5.30:00 The Bill (98263461) 6.30:00 The Dukes of Hazzard (98263461) 7.00:00 George and Mildred (2346567) 7.30:00 Terry and June (2329838) 8.30:00 East-Enders (98263461) 9.30:00 The Bill (98263461) 10.30:00 The Bill (98263461) 11.30:00 The Bill (98263461) 12.30:00 The Bill (98263461) 1.00:00 The Bill (98263461) 1.30:00 The Bill (98263461) 2.00:00 The Bill (98263461) 2.30:00 The Bill (98263461) 3.00:00 The Bill (98263461) 3.30:00 The Bill (98263461) 4.00:00 The Bill (98263461) 4.30:00 The Bill 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Billion-dollar man who came in from the cold

Matthew Bond chooses his winners for alternative business awards of 1992, a year of stagnation and painful lessons

Remember this time a year ago: wrestling with the dilemma of whether to begin 1992 by forecasting economic recovery in the fifth quarter — or the sixth? Tricky, wasn't it? And what a complete waste of time. A year may have passed, but the economy hardly budged, its progress apparently frozen in the icy grip of perma-recession.

Just about the only things still rising after this *annus immobilis* are unemployment, which moves ever closer to 3 million, and a supposedly far-sighted stock market, which seems to have been anticipating recovery for much longer than it ever discounted recession. Clearly, there are still people around with money to bet on a tenth-quarter recovery. Or should that be eleventh?

But 1992 was not just a year of going nowhere. There were lessons to be learnt on the way. We now know, for instance, that floors, especially those laid on fragile European foundations, are there not to be walked on, but fallen through. We know, too, that interest rates can be both very high and very low within a few weeks, even hours, of the other — and that both are right. How do we know? That nice Norman Lamont told us.

But our prize for Businessman of the Year goes to someone who did not listen to a word Mr Lamont said. Or if he did, George Soros did not believe it. Like all the best ideas, his was brilliant in its simplicity.

In essence, Mr Soros just did not believe that Britain, whose economy was compared ever more frequently with that of the thirties, could have a currency exploring historic highs against the American dollar courtesy of astonishingly high British interest rates. Something had to give. By staking his financial might that it would be the pound that buckled, Hungarian-born Mr Soros and his Quantum fund collected a \$1 billion profit when Mr Lamont eventually bowed to the inevitable in September. Mr Soros also wins PR Triumph of the Year, by giving away \$50 million of his profit to charities working in Yugoslavia and thereby making currency speculation almost acceptable. Runner-up is Peter

Wood, chief executive of Direct Line, the insurance arm of the Royal Bank of Scotland, who earned a \$6 million bonus last year as a result of the company's phenomenal success. Mr Wood said he was not interested in material possessions but "liked playing tennis and playing with his children". His children are now wondering what to do with the Andre Agassi they got for Christmas. One note of caution for our winners. Two of last year's joint winners, Michael Jordan and Richard Stone, the high profile insolvency experts at Coopers & Lybrand, were this year found guilty of professional misconduct and fined £1,000 each. So no resting on your laurels.

Chancellor of the Year. No real surprises here — indeed, no real contest. Step forward Helmut Schlesinger, president of the Bundesbank, who controlled British economic policy this year with a vice-like grip. As long as there was even the teeny-weeniest chance of inflation in Germany, interest rates throughout western Europe had to be high. Helmut Schlesinger also wins a special St Peter Prize for denying that on three occasions before devaluation he said the pound was over-valued.

Booby prize in this section goes to John Smith for failing to recognise that announcing plans to raise combined tax rates on fairly modest levels of income to 59 per cent was not a good way of endearing the Labour party to Britain's middle classes, or of winning a general election.

Access Award for Most Flexible Friend. No shift in economic policy was too much for our accommodating winner — name your target and our man delivers. As for the exchange-rate mechanism, he can take it or leave it. Without a scintilla of doubt, step forward Norman Lamont.

Teflon Non-stick Award. To Sir Terence Burns, who is still permanent secretary to the Treasury. Sir Terence is forecasting that he will collect his prize in March. See you in November, Terry.

Norman Lamont Prize for Economic Consistency. To John Major, who told the Scottish CBI on September 10



Business faces of '92: clockwise from bottom left, Sir John Gorton, Helmut Schlesinger, Gerald Ratner, Lord Spens, John Bryan, Pandora and Kevin Maxwell, George Soros and Norman Lamont

that leaving the ERM and devaluation were not on the government's agenda. "The soft option, the devaluer's option, would be a betrayal of our futures," he said. So much for the future then.

Financial Adviser of the Year. John Bryan, investment adviser to the Duchess of York, despite his apparent belief that the SIB's "cooling off" regulations meant a vigorous length or two in the pool.

PR Gaffe of the Year. Mr Bryan was a strong contender in this category as well, although in the end he was comfortably beaten by Michael Heseltine, the trade secretary. Mr Heseltine's political career is not expected to recover from the outcry that greeted his announcement in October that he planned to close 31 British Coal pits with the loss of 30,000 jobs. Nor was the British coal industry until the High Court declared the decision unlawful in December.

The Winston Churchill Prize for Supreme Sacrifice. Never has so much been owed by so few. So much was the small matter of more than £4 billion of underwriting losses incurred between 1988-90. So few were the dwindling band of British gentry forced to foot the bill. As the year came to a close, it looked likely that the number of this gallant band of Lloyd's names still able to satisfy the solvency requirements would fall below 20,000. All those that remain share the big cash prize, which is normal will be collected by a working member.

The Paul Reichmann Award for Property Speculation. To Barclays Bank, which proved it had an unerring nose for an over-priced property deal. Imry, Rosehaugh, Heron, Canary Wharf, Mountleigh — Barclays lent to them all. Trevor Osborne, of Speyhawk, spoke for the property industry when in May he told Sir John Gorton, Barclays' chairman: "Sir John, we owe you more than we can ever repay." Sir John will

collect the prize next month, after his retirement.

The Black Hole of Bombay. To Standard Chartered Bank which discovered that lending to investors on the Bombay stock market could have lost it more than £100 million. Rodney Galpin, Standard Chartered's chairman, will collect this prize in June, after his retirement.

No matter how big the mistake, how damaging the error of judgment, apologies and resignations were simply not on the agenda in 1992. "I make mistakes therefore I am", was the rule. The exception and Most Honourable Departure winner was George Nissen, who resigned as chairman of the Investment Management Regulatory Organisation in June after the body was severely criticised for its miserable role in the Maxwell pension fund saga.

The Award For Media Relations. To Pandora Maxwell for phily responding to a 6.30 am ring on the front door bell by leaning out of an upstairs window and telling those assembled below to "piss off". Mrs Maxwell's excuse was that she thought she was addressing the press. Unfortunately, she was addressing the police, who had come to arrest her husband, Kevin.

The Uriah Heep Award. To Kevin Maxwell, who, on being declared Britain's biggest ever bankrupt in September, with personal debts of more than £400 million, said he found it

a "very humbling experience". As the year drew to a close, brother Ian was also threatened with bankruptcy when the High Court ordered him to pay an interim £500,000 to the Mirror Group pension funds.

Non-Events of the Year. First prize to Hanson, which in an action-packed 12 months failed to buy Canary Wharf, Ranks Hovis McDougall and Costain's Australian coal operation. Runner-up was Tony Ryan and GPA, the Irish aircraft leasing company which, despite the help of Lord Lawson and Sir John Harvey Jones, turned the \$3 billion stock market float planned for the summer into a \$3.5 billion emergency debt refinancing just six months later. Third prize goes to Alan Sugar for failing to take Amstrad private.

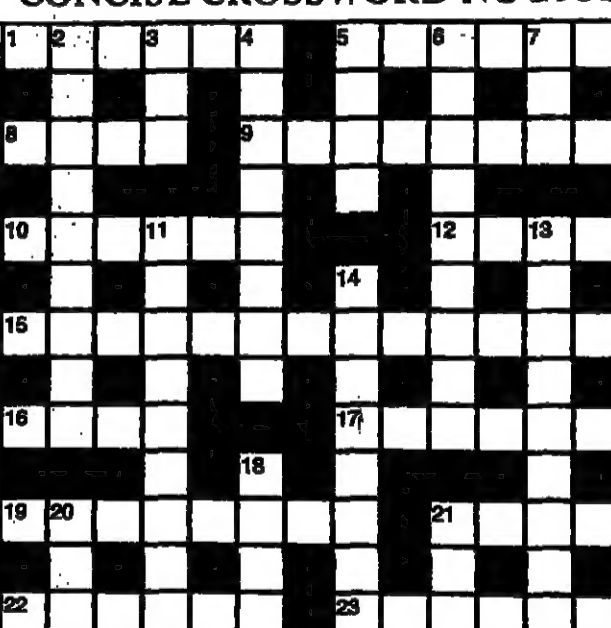
Publish and Be Damned. To Terry Smith, former head of research at UBS Phillips & Drew. He did and was... and was sacked into the bargain.

The Good... A disastrous year for the Serious Fraud Office. But a better one for those on the receiving end of their prolonged attentions. For the Guinness Two, things came to a halt in February when the trial of Roger Seelig and Lord Spens was halted on the grounds of Mr Seelig's ill-health. Lord Spens had to wait until November though to be formally acquitted.

As for the Blue Arrow Four, it was a case of £40 million of trial costs very badly spent. Having initially been given

Continued page 26, col 3

CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 2981



ACROSS

- 1 Bets (6)
- 5 In arrears (6)
- 8 Scratch (4)
- 9 Great stone block (8)
- 10 Canoe blade (6)
- 12 School intake (4)
- 15 Games champion (6,7)
- 16 Support (4)
- 17 Stout stick (6)
- 19 Talent (8)
- 21 S African colonist (4)
- 22 Specialist (6)
- 23 Neutralise (6)

DOWN

- 2 Loquacious (9)
- 3 Thames botanical garden (3)
- 4 Uniformity (8)
- 5 Ship's bed (4)
- 6 US film centre (9)
- 7 Negative (3)
- 11 Decide (9)
- 13 Pastime (9)
- 14 Formal lunch (8)
- 18 Break (4)
- 20 Eucharist receptacle (3)
- 21 Shooting haul (3)

SOLUTION TO NO 2980

- ACROSS: 1 Walter Raleigh 2 Leg up 3 Cobbled 10 One 11 Irons 12 Draff 14 Memory 16 Afghan 20 Offhand 23 Nails 24 Ore 25 Rancour 26 Loose 27 Treasury Bills
- DOWN: 1 William Dorrit 2 Leg room 3 Exposer 5 Libya 6 Inlet 7 Hedge one's bets 13 Fag 15 Och 17 Fanclub 18 Hair oil 19 Adorer 21 Fence 22 Atoms

CROSSWORD ENTHUSIASTS: For mail order details of all Times Crossword Books and The Times Computer Crossword software with help levels (runs on most PCs), call Akom Ltd on 081 852 4575 (24 hrs) or CDs Dynacaster on 0302 890 000. Just released - The First Book of The Times Jumbo Concise Crosswords, £5.50, ring Akom. Postage free until December 31 (applies UK only).

WINNING MOVE

Grandmasters Arur Yusupov and Jon Speelman were both world championship semi-finalists in 1989, but in their game from the Foreign & Colonial Hastings Premier 1989/90, Speelman, playing black, overlooked a possibility to win material. Can you see what he missed? British grandmasters Nunn and Speelman will be among the eight players in the top section at this year's Hastings tournament. Further details from the British Chess Federation on 0424 442500 (Raymond Keene).

Solution on page 16.



WORD-WATCHING

By PHILIP HOWARD

SLANG

- CREEPING JESUS
a. A Jesuit missionary
b. A brown-noser
c. An ejaculation
- PIKING
a. A drug king
b. Cheating
c. Pimping

SHONKY

- a. Unreliable
b. A white woman
c. A hand-gun
- GOOGIE
a. To ogie lasciviously
b. The withers
c. An egg

Answers on page 16

Reviewing Your Portfolio? Why Not Review Your Stockbroker

Investment (UK Securities)	Investment (US Securities)	Investment (European Securities)	Investment (Global Securities)
\$2,000	\$43	\$25	42%
\$8,000	\$135	\$65	52%
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Cheers to a £24bn drinks bill

By MARTIN WALLER AND DEREK HARRIS

BRITAIN is heading for a £24.3 billion hangover after the Christmas and New Year festivities. This is the amount the population will have spent on drink in 1992, and a quarter of that will have been taken home, according to a report on off-licences from Verdict Research, the specialist retail consultant.

The paper charts the decline of the public house in favour of the off-licence and big supermarket chains. The increasing popularity of wine, and the inability of the average pub to provide the standard expected by a more discriminating population, is also helping the off-trade to make gains. Verdict says that Britain

will grow ever more abstemious. Spending on drink will have risen 3 per cent in 1992, behind the overall rise in consumer spending.

Separate research commissioned by the Scotch Whisky Association shows, for the first time, how far whisky distillers' problems can have a knock-on effect outside the industry. Although exports of Scotch whisky are holding up, sales in the UK have fallen this year 10 per cent, or by about 1 million cases, raising fears of short-time working in the industry and possible job losses.

The number of those directly employed in the whisky industry has been reduced to 15,000, but the research

shows that 56,000 jobs outside the industry are dependent on Scotch making. The industry annually buys in £836 million in goods and services from UK sources.

Scotch exports are running at £1.8 billion a year with 85 per cent of production going abroad.

The Scotch whisky makers are campaigning for more equal taxation of drinks, based on alcohol content. A glass of whisky and one of wine contain the same amount of alcohol yet excise duty on the whisky is 23p against 12p on the wine, the association says.

Off-Licences, Verdict Research, 112 High Holborn, London, WC1V 6JS.